



*President:* Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

### AGENDA ITEM 29

#### The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: report of the Secretary-General

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at 5 p.m.

*It was so decided.*

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, who will introduce draft resolution A/38/L.17.

3. Mr. YAQUB-KHAN (Pakistan): This is the fifth time that the General Assembly has taken up consideration of the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. The Soviet military intervention which began in December 1979 with the induction of troops into Afghanistan—troops now numbering over 100,000—persists to this day. Throughout this period, in keeping with their proud traditions of freedom and independence, the valiant Afghan people have continued, with fierce determination, their resistance to the occupation of their country and against a régime which was installed and is being sustained by alien forces. A direct consequence of the foreign military intervention has been the massive exodus of Afghan refugees who, driven by persecution, have been forced to seek shelter in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.

4. The foreign military intervention in Afghanistan constitutes a flagrant violation of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and of the norms of conduct governing inter-State relations. This violation poses a threat to peace and stability not only in the region but throughout the world, and its continuation is fraught with the most dangerous consequences.

5. There have been attempts in some quarters to dismiss the resistance of the Afghan people as a counter-revolutionary phenomenon, encouraged and sponsored from outside. But the stark reality of ruthless suppression and heroic resistance, of the bombing of villages and the flight of innocent men, women and children from their homes, has persisted for four long years and has been witnessed and recorded by impartial observers throughout the world.

6. These accounts clearly illustrate the magnitude and intensity of the Afghan resistance and its indigenous character. It is spread across the entire length and breadth of the country, including the provinces along the northern borders of Afghanistan. The conflict is taking a heavy toll of innocent Afghan lives every week. According to some estimates, since that fateful day in December 1979 when Soviet forces entered Afghanistan, nearly 130,000 Afghans have perished and more than a quarter of the population has fled the country.

7. Apart from the suffering it has brought to the Afghan people, the foreign military intervention has had a serious impact on the international political situation. The Afghanistan crisis has dealt a severe blow to the concept of détente, and has been one of the principal causes of deterioration in the international climate. It continues to be a stumbling-block in the way of improvement of relations between the East and the West and between the Soviet Union and China. By undermining the security environment of a highly sensitive region, it has contributed to the heightening of global tensions. It has also set a dangerous precedent for the future.

8. Recognizing these realities and conscious of the grave consequences, the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference have all expressed deep concern over the foreign military intervention and have repeatedly called for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and for respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of that country. The verdict of the international community is firm and clear. The crisis in Afghanistan is the direct result of foreign armed intervention and its solution lies in the termination of that intervention.

9. In calling for a just and comprehensive settlement of the Afghanistan crisis, the General Assembly, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference have emphasized the following basic principles: the immediate and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan; preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan; the right of the Afghan people to determine its own form of government and to choose its economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever; and the creation of the necessary conditions that would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour.

10. In spite of the support of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the resolutions and decisions enunciating the above-mentioned principles have not been implemented. Nevertheless, the search for a political settlement has continued through the initiative and efforts of the Secretary-General.

11. Here I wish to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for his patient and determined pursuit of a just settlement of the problem. His important report [A/38/449] assesses the progress made in the diplomatic process initiated by him and indicates how he intends to proceed in the future. We also wish to record our appreciation of the untiring efforts of Mr. Diego Cordovez, the personal representative of the Secretary-General. As a result of his visits to the area and the indirect negotiations conducted by him in Geneva, there has been substantial progress in delineating the elements and the structure of a comprehensive settlement.

12. Pakistan fully supports the efforts of the Secretary-General. We have always extended and will continue to extend to him our complete co-operation. We are convinced that there can be no military solution to the problem. The only possible solution is a political one, and it is manifestly in the interests of the world community that such a solution should be found. We agree with the Secretary-General's observation that "valuable and indispensable work has been accomplished . . . [through] the diplomatic process [which] has . . . gone a long way towards the achievement of a fair and lasting political solution" [*ibid.*, para. 11].

13. The Secretary-General has, however, expressed concern "at the slow pace of the negotiations" and what he perceives as "the difficulties encountered in overcoming existing obstacles" [*ibid.*, para. 12]. In our view, an indication of these difficulties is provided in the report when it speaks of the Geneva discussions, which focused mainly on the definition of the contents of a political settlement. The four component elements of the settlement include the withdrawal of foreign troops, non-intervention and non-interference, international guarantees and voluntary return of Afghan refugees. It is in the context of these elements and their interrelationship that the time-frame for the withdrawal of foreign troops, consultations with the refugees and international guarantees were identified at Geneva last June as the three main outstanding issues. These issues are integral to the comprehensive settlement and their resolution is vital for further progress.

14. I would like to elaborate on Pakistan's position regarding the diplomatic process. The positive and constructive approach of Pakistan to the indirect negotiations is borne out by the record. It will be recalled that it was at Pakistan's initiative that the then Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, appointed a personal representative and set in motion the diplomatic process. We co-operated fully with Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar in preparing the ground and then, with his successor, Mr. Diego Cordovez, in setting aside the procedural problems and going straight into issues of substance.

15. The outline of an agenda took shape during Mr. Cordovez's visit to the region in April 1982, and at the first round of indirect talks in Geneva in June 1982 we were able to identify the four elements of a comprehensive settlement and the interrelationship between them. On that occasion it was also agreed that consultations with the refugees were an important aspect of the diplomatic process and that appropriate mechanisms would be devised to carry out such consultations so as to ensure that the conditions for their voluntary return would be satisfactory to the refugees.

16. When the Secretary-General's personal representative visited the area in January 1983, we readily accepted the outlines and structure of the comprehensive settlement which he was proposing and endorsed the policy mechanisms underlying it. An important understanding reached was that there would be simultaneity in the implementation of all of the four elements of the settlement. This understanding helped to overcome the apparently interminable argument about cause and effect and reflected the conviction that the main purpose of the indirect negotiations should be to solve the problem rather than to vindicate one point of view or the other. We readily agreed to another round of indirect talks at Geneva to discuss the draft of the comprehensive settlement submitted by the personal representative of the Secretary-General.

17. At the second round of the Geneva discussions in April and at the resumed session in June 1983, Pakistan

gave further proof of its genuine desire to reach an early settlement by adopting a constructive and positive attitude towards the draft text, and we were able to make substantive progress on a number of provisions. The second round of the Geneva discussions also resulted in a reaffirmation of the earlier understanding that the settlement was to be an integrated one and in identifying the three major issues which remained outstanding and to which I have already referred. We accepted without hesitation the proposal that the Secretary-General's personal representative should visit the area again in late summer in order to carry the negotiations forward. In spite of other previous commitments, I agreed to the dates which were proposed for the visit and was disappointed that it did not materialize.

18. Thereupon, we immediately informed the Secretary-General of our readiness to hold the next round of indirect talks during the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly in New York. In accordance with his wishes, we agreed that informal consultations should be held, and I was able to have useful discussions with the Secretary-General and his personal representative last month. It was then suggested that these consultations should be continued at the time of the Afghanistan debate, when both the interlocutors would again be present in New York. We were prepared to resume consultations from 14 November, the date which you, Mr. President, had kindly agreed to set for the debate on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. When we were informed that the representatives of the Kabul régime could not be in New York on that date, we agreed to the postponement of the debate for a week. I nevertheless made it a point to come to New York a few days earlier so that I should be available to the Secretary-General and his personal representative for informal consultations. Regrettably, our gesture proved futile, as the other interlocutor could not make himself available.

19. I have recapitulated these developments in some detail so that there should be no doubt or misunderstanding whatsoever about Pakistan's commitment to the United Nations process and its support for the efforts of the Secretary-General.

20. Pakistan has also made its full contribution to the progress which has so far been made on some of the substantive issues. However, the settlement which is visualized is an integrated one with all the elements interrelated to each other. Progress on one front would be nullified if it were not matched by similar progress on others. Every effort must be made, therefore, to resolve those issues which have been clearly identified as outstanding. For this purpose, it is necessary to move ahead on the basis of the work already accomplished and the understanding already reached. The important task is to resolve outstanding issues of substance, not of procedure. We believe that the method of indirect negotiations can be usefully pursued and that the demand for direct talks in and by itself does not enhance the prospects for resolving issues of substance. Above all, it is imperative that the negotiations continue. The issues are complex and we must not give way to discouragement even if the rate of progress sometimes falls short of our expectations.

21. The Secretary-General will need the continuing support of the international community in his difficult task. It was with the objective of generating support for the efforts of the Secretary-General that I undertook a tour of the capitals of the five permanent members of the Security Council in May and June of this year. I was encouraged to find that the United Nations process enjoyed support in all these capitals. We believe that the

success of this process would have a markedly positive effect on the many other issues that divide the world and that the stage has now been reached when the great Powers, particularly the Soviet Union, can help facilitate progress towards the goal of a just and lasting settlement of the Afghanistan problem. In this context, the indication of a reasonable time-frame for the withdrawal of troops would give a decisive impetus to the United Nations process, thus leading to an early solution.

22. Pakistan has a direct stake in the just and durable settlement of the Afghanistan crisis. The present situation poses a threat to our security which has manifested itself in repeated violations of our airspace and territory. Pakistan has regularly kept the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General informed about these violations. We have exercised the utmost restraint in the face of grave provocations which on occasion have resulted in loss of life and damage to property. We exercise restraint because we do not wish in any way to jeopardize the prospects for a peaceful negotiated solution.

23. The other aspect of the Afghanistan crisis which is of deep concern to us is the presence on our soil of nearly 3 million Afghan refugees. This constitutes a humanitarian problem of colossal magnitude and places an enormous burden on our limited resources. The number of these refugees increases with each day that the conflict continues within Afghanistan. While we are doing everything within our ability to alleviate the suffering of these unfortunate people, it remains our sincere hope that the conditions will soon be created in Afghanistan to enable them to return to their homes in safety and honour.

24. The plight of the Afghan refugees and the nature of the assistance which Pakistan has been providing to them has been seen by hundreds of observers who have visited the refugee camps. We are proud of this opportunity to assist our fellow Muslims in their hour of need. We are proud of the recognition and appreciation which our modest efforts have received throughout the world. We are not a rich country. One observer has characterized our efforts as a rare phenomenon in the present-day world, where a country which has very little is sharing it willingly with those who have even less.

25. Are we not justified, then, in expressing strong resentment when in some quarters attempts are made to portray our humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees as evidence of interference by us in the internal affairs of Afghanistan? We categorically reject these slanderous allegations. We have no desire to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, just as we have no intention of allowing others to interfere in our internal affairs. We have repeatedly stated that the refugee camps in Pakistan are open for all to come and see for themselves. We resent equally strongly the ridiculous suggestion that Pakistan is obstructing the voluntary return of the Afghan refugees. Nothing would please us more than that these unfortunate people should return to their homes. The creation of conditions for their voluntary return and meaningful consultations with them to ascertain that these conditions are satisfactory to them are, from our point of view, an urgent and pressing necessity if we are to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Afghanistan problem.

26. Pakistan is bearing more than half the expenditure on the Afghan refugees, but I should like to express our gratitude to the many friendly States, as well as to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international agencies, for the generous manner in which they have been sharing the responsibility with us. We are

confident that, as long as the need is there, the international community will continue to do its humanitarian duty.

27. With the permission of the Assembly, I should like now to introduce the draft resolution on this item [A/38/L.17] on behalf of its sponsors.

28. In introducing the draft resolution, I wish first of all to say that its primary purpose is to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the Afghanistan crisis and not to apportion blame. We do not seek indictments; we seek solutions. As was true of last year's resolution, the present draft resolution is free of polemics. It reaffirms the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, to which all Member States subscribe. It expresses the deep concern of the General Assembly at the continuing foreign armed intervention in Afghanistan and reiterates the principles on which a peaceful solution must be based. Thus, it calls for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops and reaffirms the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever. It also addresses itself to the humanitarian problem of the Afghan refugees and calls for the creation of the necessary conditions which will enable them to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour. It renews the Assembly's appeal to all States and national and international organizations to continue to extend humanitarian relief assistance with a view to alleviating the hardships of the refugees.

29. Above all, the draft resolution once again expresses the support of the General Assembly for the efforts of the Secretary-General, and specifically for the diplomatic process initiated by him in the search for a solution to the problem. By referring specifically to the diplomatic process, the draft resolution takes appropriate cognizance of the progress so far made and, in encouraging the Secretary-General to continue his efforts, helps to maintain the momentum of that process. Finally, the draft resolution seeks to ensure that the United Nations remains seized of this grave problem and requests the Secretary-General to keep Member States and the Security Council concurrently informed of the progress towards the implementation of the resolution.

30. It is our hope that, as in past years, the draft resolution will receive the overwhelming support of the membership of the General Assembly. The Afghanistan problem must be resolved speedily and peacefully so that the torment and anguish of the freedom-loving people of that country can be brought to an end, the millions who have been displaced can return to their homes, the deeply felt concerns of the regional States can be allayed, and the dangers to world peace and security can be reduced.

31. A clear enunciation, once again, of the principle of the Charter and a reaffirmation of the call for a peaceful solution based on those principles and achieved through the intermediary of the Secretary-General are more than ever necessary today, as we witness an alarming increase in international tensions.

32. The Afghanistan crisis was the first manifestation of the deteriorating international climate, and it has been followed by a series of events which have steadily heightened global tensions. The draft resolution attempts to rectify the consequences of the violation of fundamental principles that created the crisis. It is our belief that by re-establishing the principles and norms of international conduct in the solution of the Afghanistan problem, we will have taken the first major step towards a general easing of global tensions and towards the eventual goal of a true and lasting climate of détente.

33. I express the hope, on behalf of the sponsors, that draft resolution A/38/L.17 will receive the full support of the Assembly. The obligation to support this draft resolution flows naturally from a commitment to the fundamental principles of the Charter and to peace in the world.

34. Mr. MANOLATOS (Greece): On behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community, I wish to address the Assembly on the item before it.

35. Another year has passed without substantive progress towards a peaceful political solution in Afghanistan. This conflict continues to be a matter of profound concern to the 10 member States of the European Community—and, indeed, to the General Assembly—because of the continuing violation of the independence of a traditionally neutral and non-aligned country.

36. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan has continued for nearly four years. The situation remains unchanged despite repeated condemnations and calls for withdrawal of the occupying forces and for a negotiated settlement which would permit Afghanistan's independence and non-aligned status to be restored, allow the Afghan people fully to exercise their right to self-determination and enable the Afghan refugees to return home in safety and honour.

37. The situation in Afghanistan remains a major cause of international tension and continues seriously to affect the stability of the region and of the world as a whole. The large-scale Soviet military intervention in that country and the four years of continuing occupation are a flagrant breach by a Member State of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and, at the same time, clear testimony to the willingness of the Soviet Union to pursue its aims by use of its massive military potential. This act of force against the people of a developing and non-aligned country has shocked the international community. The Soviet occupation has provoked strong and prolonged resistance on the part of the Afghan people. The conflict continues to preoccupy us. It constitutes an increasingly severe burden for neighbouring States, an ever-present threat to the stability of the region and, indeed, a constant danger to international peace and security.

38. Another aspect of the problem of major importance is the human misery caused in Afghanistan in enormous proportions. The 10 member States of the European Community condemn the attacks committed against Afghan civilians and the widely reported destruction of villages, irrigation works and farming land, as well as the indiscriminate mining of country tracks. More than 20 per cent of the Afghan population has had to flee its home country. This exodus continues, and thousands of additional refugees have reached the camps in neighbouring countries. In Pakistan alone, there are almost 3 million Afghan refugees, the largest concentration of refugees in the world. Their plight and their suffering must not be forgotten. Indeed, the European Community and its member States have been making a significant contribution towards the international relief efforts and they will continue to do so as long as this need persists. But what the refugees want is to be able to go home. The principles which would enable them to return to their homes in full security and dignity have been clearly laid down by the General Assembly. It is a matter of deepest regret that the occupying Power as yet remains unwilling to accept a solution in accordance with these principles, even though they have been endorsed by the overwhelming majority of the United Nations.

39. The 10 member States of the European Community cannot accept the attempt to impose a régime by force

on the people of Afghanistan. In seeking a political solution, they have given their support and encouragement to the initiatives of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and welcomed the efforts made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. They have also given their full support to General Assembly resolution 35/37, of 20 November 1980, which led to the appointment by the Secretary-General of a representative who would be able to exercise his good offices in promoting a political solution in accordance with the provisions of that resolution. The 10 member States of the European Community continue to follow with interest the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representative, Mr. Cordovez. They appreciate these efforts aimed at a political solution based on the principles of the relevant United Nations resolutions. They have noted the Secretary-General's report [A/38/449] and share his deep concern at the slow pace of the indirect discussions and at the difficulties encountered in overcoming existing obstacles. In particular, they are concerned that no progress has been made on the question of the withdrawal of the occupation forces, which remains the key requirement of any solution. In this context the 10 member States once again draw attention to the European Council's proposal of 30 June 1981 for a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict.<sup>1</sup> They continue to believe that only a settlement which is ultimately endorsed by the Afghan people and which takes fully into account their fundamental right to self-determination will make lasting peace and stability in the area possible. As is known, the European Council's proposal seeks to bring about the cessation of external intervention and the establishment of safeguards to prevent such interventions in the future, and takes fully into account the legitimate interests of the countries of the area. The 10 member States of the European Community maintain their proposal and their readiness to enter into discussions over it. While recalling this proposal, they are prepared to support any constructive initiative aimed at a satisfactory political solution.

40. In this debate we are reaffirming the great importance which the international community continues to attach to the question of Afghanistan. The General Assembly must once more make clear that it cannot condone any attempt to create a *fait accompli* and that its desire to seek a genuine political solution remains undiminished.

41. Mr. PELLETIER (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): Nearly four years have elapsed since Soviet troops occupied Afghanistan. On four separate occasions, the General Assembly has responsibly debated the situation in Afghanistan and adopted resolutions expressing grave concern at the continuing foreign armed intervention in that country. Other respected bodies, such as the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Commonwealth, have also called for the withdrawal of the occupation troops and the restoration of Afghanistan's independence and non-aligned character. Unfortunately, however, the Soviet Union not only continues to disregard these resolutions but even opposes the inclusion of this question on the agenda. Instead of responding to the clear will of the international community, the Soviet Union continues to increase the numbers and the weaponry of its forces in Afghanistan.

42. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan continues to be a major impediment to peace and stability in Asia with implications which extend far beyond its borders. The presence of more than 100,000 Soviet troops in a non-aligned Asian State, in flagrant disregard of world public opinion, casts a shadow over the region as a whole and has directly impeded progress towards such objectives as establishing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.



43. The situation in Afghanistan is highly relevant to the broader search for peace. It has added to the atmosphere of international distrust which is prevalent in the world. It is clear, however, that this situation could be dramatically changed if those who created it were to respond positively to the efforts of the Secretary-General and his personal representative to find a just solution.

44. The process initiated by the Secretary-General should normally lead to the diplomatic solution we all hope for. We note with approval that this year's draft resolution [A/38/L.17] continues to stress the essential elements of a peaceful settlement: first, the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan; secondly, the right of the Afghan people to choose their own form of government and socio-economic system, free from outside interference; thirdly, the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops; and, finally, the creation of conditions which would allow the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour.

45. Canada concurs with the assessment of the Secretary-General in his report [A/38/449] that valuable and indispensable work has been accomplished over the past year. We also commend him for the manner in which he has pursued his task, always seeking to promote the achievement of a political settlement fully consistent with the four principles already cited. Pakistan's steadfast insistence on the observance of these principles is also worthy of high praise.

*[The speaker continued in English.]*

46. In supporting the achievement of a just solution based upon principles endorsed by the international community, we must draw attention to reported difficulties in achieving a time-frame for the withdrawal of foreign troops. This in fact is a crucial element of any viable agreement since it was the invasion by Soviet troops in December 1979 which precipitated the current crisis.

47. Resistance to the Soviet-backed Babrak Karmal régime is both genuine and national in character. It is evident that the Karmal régime is totally bereft of any legitimacy or significant popular support. The struggle being waged by the Afghan *mujahidin* is sustained by the dedication of the Afghan people themselves and constitutes an inspiring example of their determination not to be subjugated by brute force. The disregard by the Soviet Union and the Karmal régime of principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations has had the immediate result of driving millions of Afghan civilians from their towns and villages, many of them into exile in Pakistan or Iran. The flight of these Afghan refugees is testimony to the moral bankruptcy of the Karmal régime and the inhumanity of the tactics it employs in attempting to subdue the people of Afghanistan.

48. Once again, the draft resolution calls upon States and organizations to extend humanitarian assistance to alleviate the hardships endured by the Afghan refugees. The efforts of UNHCR and other organizations in looking after the basic needs of the refugees have been impressive and so has the response of the countries of refuge, but the tragedy remains. These people have been forced from their homes by the action of a vastly more powerful nation and their way of life has been shattered. The international community has no choice but to aid them in exile and to support measures to achieve their return to their homeland.

49. Canada intends to honour the commitment made by the Canadian Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs when, in July of this year, he visited a refugee camp near Peshawar and pledged to

continue Canadian humanitarian assistance for Afghan refugees.

50. The General Assembly must recognize not only that the current situation in Afghanistan is an affront to international decency but also that the attempt to stifle freedom in that country is to the detriment of the security of the international community as a whole. In order to protect its supposed gain, the Soviet Union is forced to maintain huge forces at vast expense. However, there has been no change in the determination of the Afghan resistance fighters to restore the independence of their country. Meanwhile, the resources of the neighbours of Afghanistan have been strained by the influx of refugees and the stability of South Asia has been directly threatened.

51. It is for these reasons that Canada hopes that the Soviet Union will reassess its involvement in Afghanistan and co-operate with the efforts of the United Nations to achieve a just solution, acceptable to the Afghan people. Canada endorses the efforts of the Secretary-General and his personal representative to achieve the framework of an acceptable solution. We call upon the Soviet Union to make an historic contribution to improving the atmosphere of international relations by accepting and genuinely supporting the United Nations effort. The alternative is a future which encompasses only more bloodshed and suffering for the people of Afghanistan.

52. Mr. LING Qing (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Despite a series of important developments in the past year, the occupation of Afghanistan by foreign forces remains an issue of public concern. Since the conclusion of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, peace-loving and justice-upholding countries have time and again expressed their wish that the relevant resolutions adopted by the Assembly be implemented and that the Soviet Government change its attitude by ending its military occupation of Afghanistan so as to solve the Afghan problem at an early date.

53. The Secretary-General and his personal representative have made considerable efforts to find a political solution to the Afghan question on the basis of the United Nations resolutions. Meanwhile, we have often heard that the Soviet Union expresses its hope for a "political solution" to the Afghan question and that "there is the possibility of a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan". However, the Soviet Union insists that the solution of the Afghan issue must be based on the proposals put forward by the Karmal régime and that only the external aspect of the Afghan problem can be discussed. This proves that it does not have a sincere desire for a political settlement of the Afghan issue. The real aim is to relieve pressure from the international community by delaying tactics, divert public attention and cool off the Afghan issue so as to legitimize in the end its aggression against and occupation of Afghanistan.

54. Since the launching of its war of aggression against Afghanistan, the Soviet Union has kept stepping up its military offensives against the Afghan resistance forces in an attempt to wipe them out. The cruel suppression by the Soviet troops has led to the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Afghans and the dispersion of more than 4 million people from their homeland to become refugees in neighbouring countries. The appearance of such vast numbers of refugees as a result of the Soviet invasion is something rarely seen in modern history. It must be pointed out that the Soviet Union has stepped up its efforts in establishing or expanding air bases and in building strategic highways, bridges, barracks, oil depots and other military installations on an enormous scale that far exceeds the needs of the so-called temporary garrisoning of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. All this proves that it

is prepared for a prolonged occupation of Afghanistan and tries to turn the country into a major strategic base for its southward expansion.

55. In order to cover up its crimes of aggression against and intervention in a neighbouring country, the Soviet Union confuses right and wrong and plays the old tricks in trying to justify its invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in every possible way. It still describes the deliberations of the General Assembly on the situation in Afghanistan as interference in the internal affairs of that country. What is more, it regards as outside interference the resistance movement of the Afghan people against foreign aggression and the sympathy and support of the Islamic, non-aligned and other countries for the just struggle of the Afghan people. As is known to all, there was not a single foreign soldier in Afghanistan before the Soviet invasion, except the large numbers of military experts and advisers dispatched by the Soviet Union, who took control of the Afghan Government and army, created contradictions among the Afghans and more than once engineered the overthrow of the legitimate Governments of Afghanistan. In order to achieve its complete control and occupation of that country, the Soviet Union finally sent out armed forces in 1979 in an open invasion of Afghanistan. These facts clearly show that it is in fact the Soviet Union that has intervened in the Afghan internal affairs.

56. Not long ago, the Soviet Union asserted that it dispatched troops to Afghanistan out of consideration for its own safety and for the security of its southern frontier. Quite the contrary: before the end of 1979, no incident happened in Afghanistan which posed a threat to the security of the southern border of the Soviet Union. The previous Governments of Afghanistan pursued a policy of neutrality, non-alignment and amity with the neighbouring countries. How could a friendly and weak Afghanistan threaten the security of a super-Power? As for the resistance movement in Afghanistan today, it has come into being and expanded only after the Soviet invasion for the purpose of resisting foreign invasion and intervention. Where there is foreign aggression, there is resistance. And resistance will come to an end only with the complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.

57. From the very beginning of the foreign invasion, the Afghan people, with a glorious tradition of struggle against foreign aggression, have put up a stiff resistance. Arming themselves with weapons captured from the enemy, they grow stronger and stronger in the course of fighting. This year, standing up to the big offensives launched by the aggressors, they have dealt the enemy heavy blows. The Afghan people are fighting not only for the independence of their motherland and national survival, but also for the just cause of peace in the region and the world at large. They have therefore won widespread sympathy and support from the justice-upholding and peace-loving peoples and countries in the world. There is no doubt that, with the strong support of the peace-loving and justice-upholding forces the world over, the valiant Afghan people will win even greater victories in their struggle against foreign aggressors and for the independence and freedom of their motherland.

58. China is a close neighbour of Afghanistan. With a long and traditional friendship behind them, the peoples of China and Afghanistan have all along lived in amity and treated each other as equals without any disputes. Since the establishment of formal diplomatic ties in 1955, the relations between the two countries have developed on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan has not only

undermined peace and stability in the region, but has also endangered China's security. Naturally, China cannot but show serious concern over this. We firmly condemn Soviet aggression against and occupation of Afghanistan. It is the consistent position of the Chinese Government that the resolutions concerning the Afghan issue adopted by the General Assembly during the four previous sessions must be implemented, foreign troops withdrawn from Afghanistan immediately and unconditionally, the status of independence and non-alignment of Afghanistan restored, the Afghan people allowed to decide their own destiny free from outside interference, and the Afghan refugees assured the right to return to their homeland in safety and dignity. The Chinese delegation wishes to reaffirm that, after the total withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, China is ready to join other countries concerned in an international guarantee against interference, by whatever means, in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and against the occupation or use of Afghan territory to infringe the independence and sovereignty of any other country in the region.

59. We are in favour of a political settlement of the Afghan issue. But any programme for political settlement must accord with the basic principles of the relevant United Nations resolutions and guarantee the implementation of those resolutions. Moreover, it should reflect the opinions of the Afghan people engaged in the fighting. The Afghan issue is in essence a question of armed intervention in and military occupation of a weak third-world country by a super-Power. Therefore, the key to its solution lies in the complete and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan.

60. The Government of Pakistan has made unremitting efforts in seeking a political solution to the Afghan problem. We appreciate very much the just position of Pakistan in adhering to the basic principles of the United Nations resolutions and calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from that country. In addition, the people and Government of Pakistan have done their utmost to provide 3 million Afghan refugees with proper resettlement and relief. This humanitarian spirit of theirs has won appreciation and admiration from the international community and public opinion.

61. This year, in order to seek an early settlement of the Afghan issue, Pakistan has, together with other countries, proposed draft resolution A/38/L.17. This draft resolution gives expression to the common desire of the majority of countries and peoples in the world and reaffirms the basic principles of the four previous relevant United Nations resolutions. The Chinese delegation is in favour of this draft resolution and calls on all Member States to give it support.

62. Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): On 27 April of this year, the Afghan people celebrated the fifth anniversary of the victory of the national democratic revolution, which opened their way to social and economic equality and the development of education, science and culture. The April 1978 revolution in Afghanistan was made necessary because of the vital need of Afghan society, which had for long been languishing under the yoke of a feudal, bureaucratic régime.

63. The revolution in Afghanistan did not create any threat to anyone—not even to the neighbouring countries and peoples. All the strength and energy of the Afghan people were directed by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan to tackling domestic problems and tasks within their country, something that was long overdue.

64. However, the victory of the national democratic revolution in Afghanistan was not to the liking of imperialism, primarily American imperialism. It was clearly not in harmony with its "vital interests"—in this particular case, in the Middle East—and imperialism found it necessary to stifle the revolution in Afghanistan.

65. As is known, such a way of maintaining "freedom and democracy" has frequently been resorted to by imperialism in the past, and it is still being resorted to. An example of a "brilliant" and "victorious" operation, according to President Reagan, was that in Grenada.

66. We believe it is highly misleading to begin counting events around Afghanistan in December 1979. That was when a limited contingent of Soviet troops was brought into Afghanistan at the request of the legitimate Government of Afghanistan, as the result of an unprovoked imperialist act of aggression, essentially amounting to an undeclared war against Afghanistan, a war that continues to the present day.

67. A reading of events surrounding Afghanistan should start from April 1978, when the domestic and external counter-revolutionary forces set themselves the task of stifling the national democratic revolution and restoring the pre-revolutionary order, whatever the cost.

68. Afghanistan was needed by the United States as an advance post against the Soviet Union and countries of the Middle East, particularly after the United States lost its military positions in Iran. It is no accident that the first major armed action against the democratic régime, in the Afghan city of Herat, occurred in March 1979, at the same time as the Shah was fleeing Iran, with the consequent ending of 25 years of United States domination in that country.

69. From June through November 1979, American instructors were training more than 30,000 mercenaries in camps and bases in Pakistan. By the end of 1979, the counter-revolutionary formations armed and supplied by international reaction totalled 100,000 people.

70. The leaders of the United States and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] countries and the Government of Pakistan were fully aware of this, but today they are trying to pretend that the request of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for assistance from the Soviet Union was unexpected and represented an emergency situation. The Soviet Union's decision to come to the assistance of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was taken at a time when there was a considerable threat to the very independent existence of Afghanistan and its territorial integrity. At the same time, it was officially stated from the very outset that the Soviet Union's military assistance to Afghanistan was limited and temporary.

71. The Soviet Union is prepared to withdraw its troops immediately, in agreement with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, as soon as foreign intervention in Afghan affairs ceases and guarantees are given that such intervention will not take place again in the future.

72. Nevertheless, it must be noted that a political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan is not part of the plans of the United States Government and its allies.

73. Since the Republican Administration entered the White House in Washington, the role of the United States in the anti-Afghan aggression has been no secret. Less than two months after President Reagan took office, he publicly expressed his readiness to increase supplies of weapons to the counter-revolutionary bands. In the autumn of 1982, a provocative resolution was tabled in the United States Congress which virtually gave the

Administration a free hand to escalate its undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. A new and blatant act of American high-handedness, its intervention in the affairs of Afghanistan, was further increased by the reception at the White House and in Congress in February of this year of the leaders of the counter-revolutionary bands, the declaration of so-called Afghanistan Day by the present Administration and the decision by the United States Senate to increase military and financial assistance to the Afghan counter-revolution.

74. According to information published in the press, in the five years since the April 1978 revolution in Afghanistan, the United States has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on sustaining the Afghan counter-revolution, while its NATO allies, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom, have spent DM 60 million and \$ 18 million, respectively. In 1983, the United States appropriated \$105 million for these purposes. The rebels were supplied with mortars, grenade launchers, recoilless weapons and anti-aircraft missiles. If they lack anything, then—according to Mario Vorman, whose remarks were published in the journal for professional assassins, *Soldier of Fortune*—it is simply plastic masks to hide their faces during terrorist operations, timing mechanisms in order to plant explosives, chemical weapons, particularly gas pistols, and silencers for small arms to deaden the sound of the shots.

75. The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America are thoroughly familiar with the *modus operandi* of the so-called protectors of freedom. In Kabul, a trial was held of members of a band caught red-handed in their crimes. One of the bandits testified in court:

"When we were trained in the camp near the city of Peshawar, it was made quite clear to us that we should burn down schools, destroy mosques and kill mullahs, and that all these acts should be performed in such a way as to ensure that suspicion fell on the Government forces."

76. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Shah Mohammad Dost, in his statement to the General Assembly on 6 October, quoted some alarming figures on the results of the counter-revolutionary banditry. He said that, since April 1978, the bandits had destroyed 50 per cent of all schools and hospitals, 75 per cent of all communication lines and a number of hydroelectric and thermal power installations of the country. Their total cost to the economy was some 24 billion afghanis, amounting to half of the total development investment made in the 20 years prior to the revolution. The Foreign Minister concluded:

"As is obvious, armed interference aimed at the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan from the territory of Pakistan is the root cause of the problem around Afghanistan. It is therefore the cessation of that interference which should constitute the main purpose of the negotiations." [21st meeting, para. 117.]

77. The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic believes that a political settlement of the situation prevailing around Afghanistan is possible and can be achieved on the basis of a complete cessation of armed or any other intervention in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and a guarantee of the non-recurrence of such intervention, which was and remains the main reason for the deteriorating situation in the region. There is an excellent basis for such a settlement—the proposals put forward by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan on 15 May 1980<sup>2</sup> and 24 August 1981.<sup>3</sup>

78. These proposals are very comprehensive, covering all aspects of the situation in Afghanistan. They are flexible, since they take into account many of the wishes expressed by Afghanistan's neighbours, particularly Pakistan. They are realistic, since they provide for protection of the national sovereignty and, at the same time, are in accordance with the national interests of all the States in the region. The programme of political settlement that has been put forward by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan provides for direct bilateral Afghan-Pakistani and Afghan-Iranian talks, as the most effective and expeditious way of settling the situation in South-West Asia. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has also declared that it is prepared to engage in trilateral talks, in which Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran would participate. It has, furthermore, expressed its consent to the participation in those talks of the Secretary-General or his representative.

79. Indeed, a number of rounds of such talks have already taken place with the participation of the personal representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Diego Cordovez. The Afghan side has made a number of efforts to achieve mutual understanding on the matters under discussion. If the other side to the negotiations were to demonstrate equal good will, then the mission of the representative of the Secretary-General would be able very soon to make it possible for direct negotiations between the parties concerned to take place.

80. The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic fully supports the constructive position of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. In our opinion, however, involving the United Nations in a fruitless discussion of the so-called Afghanistan question only plays into the hands of those who wish to prevent any political settlement and who wish to maintain tension in the region, in order to serve their own imperialist and hegemonistic interests. The United Nations should exert efforts not to heighten passions but to promote a genuine political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan.

### AGENDA ITEM 30

#### Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte: report of the Secretary-General

81. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and External Trade of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, who will introduce draft resolution A/38/L.19.

82. Mr. Said Kafe MADI SOILIHI (Comoros) (*interpretation from French*): On 12 October, when I spoke before this Assembly [29th meeting], I reserved my right to speak in greater detail on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte, which is the subject of our discussion today.

83. For eight years now, the United Nations has remained constantly seized of this question, which, as the Assembly knows, resulted from an injustice and, at the same time, constitutes a flagrant violation of public international law and is in contradiction with the fundamental interests and the sovereignty of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

84. I shall therefore endeavour today to outline once again the origins of the issue, for the sole purpose of enlightening the Assembly during this debate and of making it possible for members better to grasp all the elements of the problem, some of which are indeed not unfamiliar to them.

85. It will be recalled that every time we have spoken in the debate on this item, either in the United Nations or in the other international or regional organizations that have been seized of this question, we have always unambiguously and energetically reaffirmed that Mayotte is and will remain Comorian land.

86. In fact, for the 130 years of its presence in the Comoros, France never questioned or contested the unity of the Comoro Archipelago—quite the contrary. Successive French Governments, on the basis of history, repeatedly stressed the need to respect the territorial unity of a country whose homogeneous people share the same language, the same culture and the same religion—something rarely found elsewhere.

87. That unity is therefore not based, as some would at times brazenly claim, on artificial foundations or other administrative expediences; rather, it emanates and draws its strength from the shared history of the sister islands making up the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros—that is, the islands of Anjouan, Grande-Comore, Mayotte and Mohéli.

88. Therefore, all French legislation and administrative provisions adopted during the colonial period enshrined in the clearest way the unity of the Comoro Archipelago. To use as a starting-point the law of 9 May 1946, that law described the archipelago as “a territory enjoying administrative and financial autonomy” and clearly indicated in its background statement that “it is the Muslim religion which gives the archipelago its strong unity, reinforced by a single language, Swahili”. That unity was reaffirmed and consolidated by the law which gave internal autonomy to our archipelago on 3 January 1968.

89. When, faced with pressure from the people, France recognized the desire of the Comoros for independence, agreements were signed in Paris on 15 June 1973 between the representatives of the French Government and those of the local Comorian Government. Those agreements provided, *inter alia*, in point No. 1, that a popular referendum would be held in the Comoros, and if the majority of the population decides in favour of independence, the results, taken globally for all four islands, would have the effect of vesting in the Chamber of Deputies which is in office on that date the powers of a constituent assembly, and of vesting in the President of the Government the powers of Head of State.

90. That provision, which faithfully reflects the emphasis placed on the undeniable unity of our archipelago on the eve of its self-determination, was supported by solemn declarations by the highest French officials of the day.

91. Thus, speaking of our self-determination, the Secretary of State for Overseas Departments and Territories stated, on 26 August 1974, that the French Government had opted for an archipelago-wide consultation for three reasons:

“first, for the legal reason that under the rules of international law a territory retains the frontiers that it had as a colony; secondly, a multiplicity of different statuses for the various islands of the archipelago is inconceivable; thirdly, it is not for France to set the Comorians against each other”.

And Mr. Olivier Stirn went on to make clear that France refuses to divide the Comoros, which has the same population, the same Islamic religion and the same economic interests.

92. Two months later, those words were confirmed by the then President of the French Republic, Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who affirmed at a press conference on 24 October 1974:



“... Is it reasonable to imagine that one part of the archipelago should become independent and that one island, whatever feelings of sympathy we may have for the inhabitants, should maintain a different status?”

“I believe that we must accept contemporary reality. The Comoros are a unity, they have always been a unity, and it is natural that they should share the same fate ...

“On the occasion of the independence of a territory we should not propose to break the unity of what has always been the single archipelago of the Comoros.”

93. It is clear from those words that there could be no confusion over, no challenge to, our country's unity. This is why the population of the Comoros, in all calmness and serenity, went to the ballot box on 22 December 1974 to decide on its future, in accordance with the agreements of 15 June 1973, which I have just mentioned, and the law of 23 November 1974, concerning the organization of the referendum on self-determination.

94. You are all familiar with the results: 95 per cent of the Comorians voted for the independence of their country. On the basis of that clear and unequivocal response, it was up to the Government and Parliament of France to endorse the results of the voting process and to comply with the agreements of June 1973.

95. Hence, on 10 June 1975, a bill was presented to the National Assembly ratifying the referendum on self-determination. That bill followed the procedure agreed upon in the 1973 accords—in other words, the independence of the whole archipelago on the date set by the two parties.

96. Unfortunately, to the great surprise of one and all, the situation abruptly changed. The French Government, completely renouncing its commitments, on 3 July 1975 enacted another law, known in the Comoros as the wicked law, since it undermines the original bill by attempting to make the accession of the Comoros to independence subject to new and unacceptable conditions on the pretext that in Mayotte part of the population had voted against independence.

97. The Comorian people was shocked, and international public opinion could not conceal its indignation and its disappointment. The French Government thus violated not only its own domestic legislation but also international public law. In fact, it had violated the sacrosanct rule of the indivisibility of overseas territories and colonial entities, an important point in the French Constitution; at the same time, it totally disregarded the sacred principle of the inviolability of borders inherited from colonialism.

98. In response to these new provisions adopted by the French authorities, President Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, fortified by the support and clearly expressed will of the Comorian people, and with the approval of the local Chamber of Deputies, unilaterally proclaimed the independence of the Comoros on 6 July 1975.

99. Recognition of our independence by the international community was immediate and widespread. My country was admitted to the United Nations on 12 November 1975 as a sovereign State composed of four islands, including Mayotte, through the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 3385 (XXX). That resolution, in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial countries and Peoples, and resolution 2621 (XXV), containing the programme of action for the full implementation of that Declaration, proclaimed the sovereignty of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros over the whole of the territory that emerged from colonization.

100. However, determined to continue to the end its plan for the illegal occupation of part of our territory, in spite of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the French Government, on 31 December 1975, enacted a law which formalized the dismemberment of our country. That law, it is true, recognized the independence of the Comorian State, but of a State amputated of part of its national territory, the island of Mayotte. A few weeks later, several contingents of legionnaires arrived on that island, thus completing the last stage of the plan to occupy it and separate it from the Comorian territory.

101. In view of the widespread outcry and the unanimous condemnation by the international community of what it considered to be interference in the internal affairs of the Comorian State, the Government of France, seeking some justification, and to give an appearance of legality to its show of force, decided to organize two referendums on the island of Mayotte on 8 February and 11 April 1976. The argument advanced was to give the inhabitants of that island the possibility of expressing their choice of destiny. But it was deliberately overlooked that this was not a case of ceding a territory, or of any addition or exchange provided for by the French Constitution, but rather a secession from a single territory that had been declared independent through procedures and formalities that took place, as we all know, in due and proper form.

102. It has also been deliberately overlooked that since my country had already been admitted to the United Nations on 12 November 1975, with respect for the principle of territorial integrity, those two referendums must undeniably constitute a serious violation of the decolonization resolutions of the United Nations. In this regard, it is appropriate to recall that the reaction of the Organization was quite specific. In its resolution 31/4, of 21 October 1976, the General Assembly declared that “the occupation by France of the Comorian island of Mayotte constitutes a flagrant encroachment on the national unity of the Comorian State”. The resolution goes on to state that the Assembly:

“*Condemns* and considers null and void the referendums of 8 February and 11 April 1976 organized in the Comorian island of Mayotte by the Government of France, and rejects:

“(a) Any other form of referendum or consultation which may hereafter be organized on Comorian territory in Mayotte by France;”.

103. Like the United Nations, most major international or regional organizations that have regularly discussed this issue have unfailingly, and on good grounds, expressed their condemnation. Hence, the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, reaffirmed, in its Political Declaration, the undeniable sovereignty of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros over the island of Mayotte. It stated:

“With regard to the Comorian island of Mayotte, which is still under French occupation, the Heads of State or Government reaffirmed that it is an integral part of the sovereign territory of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros. They also expressed their active solidarity with the people of Comoros in their legitimate efforts to recover that island and preserve the independence, unity and territorial integrity of Comoros. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their support for the overall results of the referendum carried out on 22 December 1974 in the entire territory of Comoros and rejected all proposals for a new referendum in Mayotte”. [A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 72.]

104. Our cause is also supported by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which, at each of its sessions, has called upon France to return to Mayotte to the Comoros. It was in this connection that the Thirteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Niamey, from 22 to 26 August 1982, called upon "Member States to use their influence with France to speed up the negotiations with the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, on the basis of the unity and territorial integrity of that country."<sup>4</sup>

105. As far as the Organization of African Unity [OAU] is concerned, this matter is naturally one which, for more than one reason, is its own problem, because it involves the sacred struggle which the organization has undertaken in order to ensure respect for the territorial integrity of all member States.

106. The enforced separation of Mayotte from the other sister islands was a hard blow struck not only against our young State but also, and more particularly, against entire families, which found themselves overnight arbitrarily divided and separated from each other. Anyone who is aware of the homogeneity of the Comorian population and the blood ties which have existed from the very outset between the inhabitants of the various islands will understand better the grief and tragedy experienced by a people which is extremely attached to a very closely-knit social life. Those who know something of the history of the "Islands of the Moon", the name given to our archipelago by the Arabs before the sixteenth century, or who have had the good fortune to visit our islands, are aware how they all form an unquestionable whole, and very often entire families can be found living as well as owning property on two, three or four islands at the same time.

107. This separation has had adverse effects not only in human terms. It has also had a very serious impact on the economy of the archipelago. The four Comorian islands complement each other and have the sort of economy which is developed in almost complete harmony as a result of the specific production and activities of each of them. The separation of Mayotte therefore is definitely an impediment to the harmonious development of the entire country.

108. I would like to emphasize that in order to maintain this complementarity and to ensure a balanced development of our infrastructure, all major economic projects initiated by the Comorian Government take into account the island of Mayotte in their initial studies. This demonstrates quite clearly the sincere wish of the Comorian authorities to see Mayotte returned to the Comorian fold very shortly.

109. These are the real, unquestionable facts which constitute the distressing problem which we are still discussing today. I am sure members will agree with me that this problem is no different from others in various parts of the world which keep entire regions in a state of tension, thus giving rise to a climate of violence and anarchy.

110. As far as we are concerned, up till now we have resolutely chosen the path of negotiation and systematically rejected any recourse to violence in accordance with the resolutions and recommendations of the various international organizations. By acting thus, we believe that we are respecting the principles of peace and co-operation which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Naturally, our attitude, dictated by the voice of wisdom, should not be taken for weakness, and we should not fall victims to our own desire to be conciliatory.

111. As far as our people is concerned, it will continue to harbour the hope that a rapid solution can be found, since it is convinced that just causes always triumph in the

end. History, after all, is not a fixed entity but changes, as too does mankind.

112. That is why the political change that took place in France in May 1981, when the Socialist Party came to power, aroused hope among the Comorians. Indeed, it should be recalled that at the time when our country was suffering under this injustice a number of Socialist deputies, including Mr. François Mitterrand, the present President of the French Republic, in a letter addressed to the Constitutional Council, dated 13 December 1975, denounced the law relating to the consequences of self-determination for the Comoros. Remaining faithful to their principles, the Socialist deputies who signed that letter felt quite properly that the French law recognizing the sovereignty of the Comorian State as only comprising three islands of the archipelago, excluding the island of Mayotte, was unconstitutional.

113. May I quote some of the arguments put forward in this respect to shed some light on this issue? The letter says:

"We consider that this law is contrary to the Constitution for the following reasons: whenever the legislative or the executive has acted, it has done so on the basis that the archipelago of the Comoros was a single territory . . . Thus, it is quite clear that the French Republic has never called into question the territorial unity of the Comoros archipelago while international public opinion has constantly felt that the four Comorian islands were a single territory dependent on and administered by the French Republic under the conditions set forth in articles 72 *et seq.* of the Constitution."

There can be no doubt that this is a clear and unambiguous attitude.

114. The General Assembly will understand, I am sure, the renewed hope which the Comorian people now has, since, apart from making that position quite clear, the Head of the French State declared to his African counterparts, at the Franco-African Conference held in Paris in November 1981, that he was not a man to change position when the situation changed. We would not cast any doubts on these wise and benevolent statements, particularly when they come from someone who, as a deputy, was the first to defend our cause. We would simply note that two years have passed and the problem remains as it was, fraught with the risk of becoming further complicated as the years go by.

115. Nevertheless, we are somewhat heartened because we are aware of the profound attachment of this eminent Head of State to the ideals of peace and justice. Indeed, did he not recently declare, in connection with a similar issue, more specifically that of Chad:

"We cannot accept this *de facto* situation becoming a recognized act of partition. The independence, sovereignty and integrity of any State recognized by international society is a fundamental principle of French policy, more particularly, if I may say so, in the case of a country like Chad, where we have special contractual and historic responsibilities."

116. There can be no doubt that this important statement necessarily suggests to us the parallel between the sacrosanct nature of the Chad frontiers and those of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros. In the case of such a sacred principle as territorial integrity, we cannot accept any double standards. This is why the President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, with the support of his people and in an effort to preserve the fundamental interests of our country, sought to impress once again upon his French counterpart, at the Tenth Conference

of Heads of State of France and Africa, which was held at Vittel, the imperative need to adapt Franco-Comorian co-operation to historic realities and the urgent need to find through dialogue and discussion a just and satisfactory solution to the problem of Mayotte. This problem has been with us far too long; if it continues, the harmonious development of our country will, I repeat, be seriously jeopardized.

117. In listening to my statement, representatives may have noted that every top French leader of today, as of yesterday, has expressed with conviction a very clear position in favour of the unity of my country. We wonder, then, why there has been this sudden about-face.

118. Our analysis has shown that it was only after the referendum on self-determination of 22 December 1974 that the idea of the Balkanization of our archipelago arose: those who advocate such a division, motivated solely by their blind annexationism, have seen fit to play the part—if I may use a Comorian expression—of a knife cutting coldly into a piece of meat.

119. Since that is the situation today, we believe that, at a time when the constraints of the age demand national and regional unification, it is not proper that there persists in our country a harmful *fait accompli* which has undoubtedly weakened our young State's ability to flourish and to develop in perfect harmony.

120. Saint-Exupéry pointed the way for those who say that they wish to unite us when he wrote: "If you want to unite men, set them to building something together." What we—all of our islands alike—want to build is the well-being of our country, which is the well-being of our people. It is this to which we aspire and it is this which must unite us.

121. In this difficult but vital test of our young nation, the people and Government of the Comoros, aware of their rights and of the justice of their claims, will continue to struggle until their just cause triumphs.

122. This year again, they would greatly appreciate the faithful and unanimous support of the United Nations for the draft resolution being considered today, which we have the honour to submit to the General Assembly for its approval. It is our earnest hope that all members will be able to vote in favour of it.

123. Mr. AL-ASFOOR (Oman) (*interpretation from Arabic*): In conformity with the policies of the Sultanate of Oman, which are based on respect for the independence, unity, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, my delegation is participating in the debate on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

124. It is particularly important to recall that in 1975, when it approved the admission of the Comoros to membership of the United Nations, the General Assembly unambiguously reaffirmed the necessity of respecting the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro Archipelago, composed of the four islands of Anjouan, Grande-Comore, Mayotte and Mohéli.

125. The question before us was first included on the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. It is regrettable that after eight years we are still seized of the question of the return to the Republic of the Comoros of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

126. For eight years, the international community has been following the question with keen interest. It has sought to settle this dispute within the United Nations, within the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, within the Organization of the Islamic Conference and within the OAU, and has recommended that the efforts be continued, with a view to achieving an honourable and just

agreement between the two parties concerned, France and the Comoros.

127. The justice of the position of the Comoros has led the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to convene many meetings and conferences and to call for the speedy achievement of a just solution to the problem of Mayotte, an island which is an integral part of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

128. In the Political Declaration of the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, the following was stated:

"With regard to the Comorian island of Mayotte, which is still under French occupation, the Heads of State or Government reaffirmed that it is an integral part of the sovereign territory of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros. They also expressed their active solidarity with the people of the Comoros in their legitimate efforts to recover that island and preserve the independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their support for the overall results of the referendum carried out on 22 December 1974 in the entire territory of the Comoros and rejected all proposals for a new referendum in Mayotte." [A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 72.]

129. Oman appeals to the French Government to redouble its efforts and to continue the dialogue it had begun with the Government of the Comoros, so that the two parties may find the best ways and means by which to achieve a final settlement which takes into account the legitimate rights and interests of all parties, fully respecting the sovereignty of the Comoros over the entire Comoro Archipelago, including the island of Mayotte.

130. My delegation also wishes to stress the importance of serious negotiations in good faith between France and the Comoros in order to find a solution to this outstanding problem, since the present situation could be detrimental to peace and tranquillity in that region of Africa.

131. As in the case of last year's draft resolution, my delegation is among the sponsors of draft resolution A/38/L.19. It hopes that the General Assembly will adopt the draft resolution by a large majority, for it is in conformity with all the resolutions previously adopted by the United Nations on this question. The United Nations should once again unequivocally support justice by calling for respect for the independence and sovereignty of one of its Member States, the Comoros.

132. Mr. KAMARA (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): As everyone knows, the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte was first included in the agenda of the General Assembly in 1976, at its thirty-first session.

133. Since then, the international community has been following the issue with interest in the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the OAU. Hence, throughout the years and from one session to the next, we have witnessed the tireless efforts made towards arriving at a just and honourable solution both by the parties concerned—France and the Comoros—and by the appropriate organs of the above-mentioned forums.

134. The OAU *Ad Hoc* Committee of seven members, of which my country, Senegal, is honoured to be one and which is entrusted with the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte, met two years ago, from 9 to 11 November 1981, at Moroni [see A/38/517, para. 3]. The open-mindedness and the expressed will of the Comoros to find a solution to the dispute within the framework

of consultations and negotiations with France which prevailed at that meeting should, in our view, be underscored and encouraged.

135. Recently, the thirteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Niamey, from 22 to 26 August 1982, considered this question in its various aspects and made some positive proposals.<sup>4</sup>

136. The constructive nature of the debates that have taken place on this issue in various forums leads us to believe that a just and lasting settlement of the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte is possible so long as the major party to the dispute makes significant efforts as soon as possible.

137. My delegation considers there is reason to welcome the fact that France and the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros have, in a joint move, solemnly pledged to resolve the question of Mayotte through negotiations and in a spirit of mutual understanding.

138. However, for the negotiations to succeed, due regard for the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the OAU and the United Nations is essential.

139. The negotiations which had begun, but which have not been resumed for a long time now, had aroused a great deal of hope. It is essential that they be resumed without delay, with the determination to bring them to a satisfactory conclusion.

140. A new political situation in one of the two countries concerned had strengthened that hope, but the time that elapsed in waiting for conditions that would permit the taking of new initiatives has precluded any progress towards settling the problem of Mayotte.

141. None the less, in order to create the best possible conditions for dialogue, France and the Comoros have striven to increase their co-operation in various fields. In their bilateral relations, they have in more ways than one demonstrated a common desire to overcome the difficulties that have blocked the process of dialogue on the question of Mayotte.

142. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Comoros, Mr. Said Kafe Madi Soilihi, in his outstanding statement has just reaffirmed the goodwill of the Comoros, in spite of a discouraging situation which his country hopes it will soon be able to overcome.

143. The Senegalese delegation supports the claim of the Comoros, which has been regularly backed by the international community, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3385 (XXX), of 12 November 1975, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the necessity of respecting the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro Archipelago, composed of the islands of Anjouan, Grande-Comore, Mayotte and Mohéli. In fact, that resolution only reflected the points contained in explicit commitments by the French authorities—commitments undertaken on the eve of the self-determination referendum in the Comoros precisely in order to give every assurance to the Comorians as to the integrity of their territory in case of a vote in favour of independence.

144. The question of the Comorian island of Mayotte, which threatens to tarnish the reputation of a great country, may in the long term also constitute a threat to international peace and security.

145. The United Nations, one of whose fundamental tasks is to promote peace and mutual understanding among peoples and nations, should encourage the hoped-for initiatives for the prompt reopening of negotiations and the process of drafting a common agreement between France and the Comoros embodying a definitive solution to the problem of Mayotte.

146. My country, which enjoys privileged relations with both France and the Comoros, will spare no effort in contributing, in so far as it can, to the establishment of a just and lasting solution of this question. The Head of State of Senegal, Mr. Abdou Diouf, is already working with the parties directly concerned to that end and will be continuing his efforts.

147. The delegation of Senegal will accordingly vote in favour of draft resolution A/38/L.19, the implementation of which will surely bring us closer to a solution.

148. This would have the best possible effect on relations between France and the Comoros and between the French and the Comorian peoples which, in addition to the historical and cultural links uniting them, remain equally dedicated to the common ideals of international peace and solidarity.

149. Mr. KAPOMA (Zambia): My delegation has carefully studied the report of the Secretary-General on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte [A/38/517]. We have also listened carefully to the statement made at the beginning of the debate on this item by the Foreign Minister of the Comoros.

150. It is clear that there has been hardly any development in furtherance of General Assembly resolution 37/65, of 3 December 1982, which called for negotiations between the Governments of France and the Comoros with a view to the prompt return of the island of Mayotte to the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros. There have been no negotiations between the two parties, and the OAU *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Comorian island of Mayotte has still not been able to send a mission to Paris for discussions with the French authorities. Mayotte thus remains still separated from the rest of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

151. That is the background against which the General Assembly is once again considering the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte. This is obviously regrettable, particularly since it is now eight years since that historic date, 12 November 1975, when the General Assembly admitted the Comoros to membership in the United Nations, with a clear reaffirmation of the necessity for respecting the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro Archipelago, composed of the islands of Anjouan, Grande-Comore, Mayotte and Mohéli.

152. Zambia attaches great importance to the principle of respect for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of all States Members of the United Nations. We in Zambia therefore believe that everything should be done urgently to find a solution to the problem of Mayotte. Once again we appeal to the parties concerned to initiate negotiations and to seek in good faith to resolve the problem of Mayotte in accordance with General Assembly resolutions.

153. Accordingly, Zambia hopes that the report of the Secretary-General to the next session of the General Assembly will reflect progress in the negotiations between the parties concerned on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

154. Mr. AMR (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): When the delegation of Egypt participated in the General Assembly debate at the thirty-seventh session [91st meeting] on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte, it expressed the hope that a peaceful and just solution of the problem might be reached as soon as possible in the light of the desire demonstrated by the two parties concerned to reach such a solution. Yet we are still discussing the same question again this year, because that desired solution has not been achieved.



155. Egypt's particular interest in this question and its desire to see a just solution is prompted by the amicable relations between Egypt and the two parties concerned in this question.

156. Egypt's position is quite clear and has been expressed on many occasions. It can be summed up as follows. First, we support the sovereignty of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros over the island of Mayotte, as reaffirmed in the various resolutions on this question adopted by the General Assembly, as well as by the OAU and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Secondly, we call upon the two parties to enter immediately into negotiations to ensure the return of the island of Mayotte to the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros. Thirdly, we stress the need to co-ordinate the efforts of the United Nations and the OAU in this matter.

157. We fully understand the concern of the Government of the Comoros over the lack of progress in the search for a just solution to this problem. The situation remains as it was when the General Assembly discussed this question at its thirty-seventh session. This was reflected in the communication of the Executive Secretary of the OAU addressed to the Secretary-General [A/38/517, para. 3]. That communication referred also to the lack of major developments in the search for a solution to the question of the island of Mayotte since the meeting of the OAU *Ad Hoc* Committee at Moroni from 9 to 11 November 1981.

158. Despite that, however, the delegation of Egypt feels that there is real reason for hope and optimism with regard to finding a speedy and just solution of the problem of Mayotte. In addition to the pledges made by France following the referendum of 22 December 1974 on the determination of the destiny of the Comoro Archipelago, which provided for respect for the territorial integrity and unity of the Comoros, and in addition to the declarations of President Mitterrand reaffirming those pledges, the note addressed to the Secretariat of the United Nations on 6 September 1983 by the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations [*ibid.*, para. 4], clearly states the intention of the French Government to continue a constructive dialogue with the Comorian Government with a view to finding a solution to the problem of Mayotte acceptable to all parties concerned, and states that it had appointed an individual who would be entrusted with a specific task of ensuring continuity in this dialogue in close co-operation with the authorities of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

159. The delegation of Egypt, while paying tribute to the two parties for their positive efforts and their sincere desire to negotiate, expresses the hope that those efforts will yield concrete results in the near future, leading to a just solution to the problem of the island of Mayotte, so that the people of the Comoros will be able to devote

themselves to the efforts to achieving development and progress.

160. Mr. KRISHNAN (India): The question of the Comorian island of Mayotte has always been a matter of particular interest and concern to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, reaffirmed that Mayotte is "an integral part of the sovereign territory of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros" [A/38/132, and *Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 72*]. The Conference also expressed

"active solidarity with the people of the Comoros in their legitimate efforts to recover that island and preserve the independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed their support for the overall results of the referendum carried out on 22 December 1974 in the entire territory of the Comoros and rejected all proposals for a new referendum in Mayotte." [*Ibid.*]

161. While it is unfortunate that the question of Mayotte remains unresolved, the willingness of both sides to seek to resolve the matter amicably and through dialogue is a positive factor. So also is the stated wish of the current French leadership actively to seek a just settlement of the problem. We were heartened to note that, following the Tenth Conference of Heads of State of France and Africa held this year, the two Governments have decided actively to undertake negotiations with a view to resolving the issue peacefully and amicably.

162. The consideration by the General Assembly of this item today provides us, the non-aligned countries, with an opportunity to urge that a peaceful and negotiated solution to the question of Mayotte be found without further delay. We express the sincere hope that the commitments given, prior to the referendum on self-determination of 22 December 1974, concerning respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Comoros will be fulfilled and that the negotiations to ensure the effective and prompt resolution of this issue will be pursued energetically and expeditiously.

*The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No. 6, 1981, para. 1.1.13.

<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1980*, document S/13951.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-sixth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1981*, document S/14649.

<sup>4</sup> A/37/567, annex I, resolution 14/13-P.