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ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

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*Temporary President: Mr. Gaston THORN  
(Luxembourg).*

*President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE  
(Sri Lanka).*

AGENDA ITEM 1

Opening of the session by the  
Chairman of the delegation of Luxembourg

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from  
French*): I declare open the thirty-first regular session of  
the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

2. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from  
French*): I invite representatives to stand and observe one  
minute of silent prayer or meditation.

*The representatives stood in silence.*

*Address by Mr. Gaston Thorn, Temporary President,  
Chairman of the delegation of Luxembourg*

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from  
French*): The international conferences which have been  
held with particular frequency since the beginning of the  
thirtieth session have made their mark on international life  
and have struck world public opinion both by the number  
of participants and the peoples represented, and by the  
impact they may have had.

4. I am wondering whether we are not entitled to see in  
this multiplication of international contacts unequivocal  
proof of the fact that international co-operation has  
assumed new dimensions and that mankind has deter-  
minedly and definitively embarked on a course of dialogue,  
thanks to which we can harmonize everyone's interests.

5. The movement towards the building of a new world  
which to its great credit the United Nations has fostered  
and directed is a powerful cause for hope, peace and  
progress, provided, however, that the effort made is  
followed up within a reasonable period of time by decisions  
which can be reflected in tangible advantages for all men,  
because, in order to assist all those who are afflicted by the  
many scourges of today's world, we can no longer confine  
ourselves to speeches or to solemn proclamations of the  
right of all human beings to existence, to food and to a  
dignified and free life. The Universal Declaration of Human  
Rights has unequivocally set a goal that is ambitious but  
one we have all committed ourselves to attain. The  
International Covenants on Human Rights constitute a real  
step forward, albeit a timorous one, in the right direction,  
but a great deal remains to be done.

6. As long as practical measures have not been taken in  
each of our States to respect, and to ensure respect for, the  
rights of each individual, our words, void of sense, will  
remain lies and hypocrisy.

7. It is becoming more and more unacceptable for us to  
invest annually some \$300 billion in the arms race while we  
do not devote even a tenth of that amount to the struggle  
against under-development, which, however, condemns—and  
I am sorry to quote these figures, which are increasing  
dangerously—1.2 billion human beings to overwhelming  
poverty, the majority of them being, according to the  
International Labour Office, totally destitute.

8. How indeed can we properly ensure the security of the  
world when we are in this way allowing to develop one of  
the greatest sources of frustration, tension and conflict?  
This is one of the essential concerns of our Secretary-  
General.

9. It is to be hoped that we can find in these figures, which testify to a tremendous injustice, a silent injustice suffered by so many men, the necessary motivation to accelerate our work in an obviously complex field, namely, that of disarmament, confining ourselves to its priority aspects in order finally to achieve the cessation and then, it is hoped, the reversal of a trend which is a threat to the whole of mankind. No argument about the balance of power, no commercial considerations, should influence any one of us or distract us from our great responsibility.

10. Economically, the world situation today is of concern but perhaps it is encouraging at the same time. It is disturbing because of the persistence of too high a rate of inflation side by side with massive unemployment. However, it is encouraging because the problem of an equitable distribution of the world's wealth, including the resources of the sea, among all nations and for the benefit of all mankind remains the focus of our debate. At each new international meeting, whether at Vancouver, Nairobi, Paris or New York, new momentum is given to the creation of a new economic and social order, an international order marked increasingly by justice and solidarity.

11. No one has the right to oppose this just redressing among nations of the balance of economic interests and arrangements which have so far turned out to be inadequate for ensuring a significant measure of development, particularly in developing countries, which for far too long have suffered from foreign economic domination.

12. It was at the seventh special session that the General Assembly, by choosing the path of reason between confrontation and conciliation, made it possible to lay the foundations for the search for a negotiated solution. The Conference on International Economic Co-operation in Paris has been able precisely to define the positions of its participants before it embarks on the production of tangible results, I hope, in the near future. The fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD],<sup>1</sup> the great discussion group of industrialized and developing countries, ended not without success and established procedures which should lead the parties to draw closer together on the heart of the problem.

13. At the thirty-first session it is important to undertake an evaluation of the efforts made over a year and to establish the necessary guidelines to facilitate within our existing structures a crystallization of the progress already achieved.

14. At the same time, along with this necessary transformation of economic relations throughout the world, we welcome the idea of introducing into developing countries autonomous structures and new instruments which could guarantee balanced regional development and create authentic markets which would take better account of the needs and local conditions.

15. In this regard, I should like to pay a particular tribute to the non-aligned countries, which, as was recently stressed at the meeting in Colombo,<sup>2</sup> will be a driving force in the

search for a new political and economic order to the extent that they are persevering and are able to maintain unity and display creative imagination.

16. Whether it be international or regional, economic growth is not, we must stress, an end in itself. To have some sense it must be of benefit to all countries and all nationals of those countries.

17. However, with regard to the fair redistribution of national wealth and income, we must note that unacceptable privileges and inadmissible social and economic gaps survive in almost all parts of the world. In order truly to improve the conditions of all, and particularly the conditions of the most underprivileged, we can no longer delay putting into effect national development strategies. Whether it be a matter of social restructuring, the implementation of agrarian programmes or the bringing about of urban reform, all these measures are inevitable and of absolute priority.

18. More than 30 years after the foundation of the United Nations, our Organization must regrettably register a new serious setback to the tolerance which the Charter calls on all peoples to observe. For almost a year now a fierce and murderous civil war has gone on in Lebanon. Two communities are destroying each other with incredible ferocity. The world is, alas, watching this carnage, powerless and shocked by the spread of so much violence and of so much hatred.

19. I feel myself that the General Assembly must call on the different opposing parties to renounce their recourse to violence, so that they may without delay and without preliminary conditions conduct serious negotiations.

20. It is a fact that what is now happening in Lebanon is merely the latest bloody stage in the tragic conflict in the Middle East which has engaged our Organization since its foundation. Can we continue to refuse to give a definite and objective reply to the Palestinian people who, for many years, have been subjected to massacre and to a life of wandering and misfortune that only the founders of Israel had known before it?

21. We cannot deny to this people the very thing that we have granted to the other, what every people is entitled to, namely, the right to existence and to a country of its own.

22. If the parties involved in this conflict rely on the work of the Security Council, and once they are given a guarantee to live in peace, that is, within secure and recognized boundaries, they should at last be able to meet openly to work out the means for a peaceful settlement which it would be vain, indeed irresponsible, to delay any longer.

23. In southern Africa, frontier incidents proliferate, and bloody riots, which first broke out in Soweto and were followed by fierce repression, are spreading throughout the region. Under the pressure of an increasingly impatient public opinion, and faced by growing opposition at home and abroad, the white minority governments can see the last ramparts of their oppressive régimes collapsing about them. Defying all the resolutions of the United Nations,

<sup>1</sup> Held at Nairobi from 3 to 31 May 1976.

<sup>2</sup> Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 16 to 19 August 1976.

they have for too long successfully disregarded the most elementary rights of the indigenous populations, including the right to self-determination. Those who now hold power should seize the last opportunity for a dialogue which is offered to them and make at last the changes which our Organization and the real majorities of their countries are demanding. Otherwise they will run the danger of being destroyed by the violence for which they will be fully responsible and which their lack of action alone will have justified.

24. In Cyprus, new negotiations between the communities have still not led to any real progress towards an enduring settlement. It is desirable that the parties concerned should be given further and serious encouragement so that, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, they can come to grips with the fundamental problem in a serious and constructive manner.

25. International terrorism and violence have during the past weeks and months assumed, we must all admit, alarming proportions. In its most revolting form, namely the hijacking of aircraft and the taking of hostages, this phenomenon not only increasingly endangers the lives of many completely innocent individuals, but also seriously threatens the security of all our States without a single exception. No State can benefit from allowing this anarchic disturbance of international life to continue. It is therefore essential that this Assembly should fulfil its special responsibilities in the matter and succeed in adopting urgent and energetic steps.

26. Instead of dealing with the problem of terrorism as a whole, the moment may have come to concentrate our immediate efforts on one aspect of terrorism, the most important aspect—that of defending the most innocent victims by taking decisive action against the seizing of hostages.

27. In a few moments, the General Assembly will proceed to the election of the person who will preside over the debates during the coming weeks and months. I feel sure that you will elect to this office someone whose competence for such a task will need no confirmation and who will, with exceptional lucidity, successfully carry out a task which is often difficult and sometimes trying. I hope too, and in so doing I am honestly confessing my own short-comings, that he will be able to maintain, for the numerous tasks that await us, a discipline and a level of debate which have often been lacking in the past. The importance and urgency of those tasks are worthy of the prestige and universal character of the Organization which I hope we shall shortly be happy and able to strengthen and consolidate.

*Tribute to the memory of Mao Tsetung, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China*

28. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): And now I have one last and sad duty to perform.

29. A few days ago, as you know, the whole world learned of the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung. This Assembly must bow before the memory of this pioneer of his great country, the man who was called the Great Helmsman, an

outstanding personality of the twentieth century who arcused, more or less everywhere in the world, the most diverse feelings with the sole exception of indifference.

30. On behalf of this General Assembly, I should like to reiterate to the delegation of the People's Republic of China our heartfelt condolences and our feelings of deep sadness. As a tribute to the memory of Chairman Mao Tsetung, I now call on representatives to rise and to observe a minute of silence.

*The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.*

31. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Secretary-General to join in this tribute.

32. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would like, Mr. President, to associate myself with the sentiments which have been expressed by you on the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung. Today, the world is poorer for the loss of this great statesman.

33. The whole life of Chairman Mao Tsetung was devoted to his country. He was a source of constant inspiration to his people in the drive to build a new China. His leadership will remain a cherished memory for his nation in its future endeavours.

34. Chairman Mao was a great political thinker, philosopher and poet and, for almost half a century, his influence has been felt throughout the world. His ideas will leave a lasting imprint on our times and ensure him a unique place in history.

35. On this occasion I wish again to express, on behalf of the United Nations, my deep sympathy and sincere condolences to the Government and people of China and to the bereaved family.

36. Mr. HUANG Hua (China) (*translation from Chinese*): The passing of Chairman Mao Tsetung, the esteemed and beloved great leader and teacher of the Chinese people, has plunged the entire Chinese people into boundless grief and is deeply mourned by the people throughout the world. Today, at the opening of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, the President and the Secretary-General have expressed deep condolences on the passing of Chairman Mao Tsetung. In the name of the Chinese delegation to the thirty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, I would like to extend our deepest thanks to the President, the Secretary-General and other representatives, and I shall convey their heartfelt sentiments to the Chinese Government and people.

37. Since the passing of Chairman Mao Tsetung, the representatives of many countries, regional groups, organizations and national liberation movements have expressed their profound condolences on the death of Chairman Mao at the meetings of the Security Council, the fifth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, the Special Committee on decolonization,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, and others. The permanent representatives of many countries, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, officials of the United Nations Secretariat and a large number of Americans from various walks of life have paid condolence calls at the Chinese mission or sent telegrams and letters of condolences. The respect and tribute they have paid to Chairman Mao Tsetung and their high appraisal of the contributions and achievements made by Chairman Mao Tsetung in his lifetime constitute a tremendous support of and encouragement to the just cause carried on by the Chinese people under the leadership of Chairman Mao. We are deeply moved. We wish to take this opportunity to express once again our heartfelt thanks to them.

38. Chairman Mao Tsetung was the founder and wise leader of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese People's Liberation Army and the People's Republic of China. He dedicated all his energies throughout his life to the liberation of the Chinese people and to the emancipation of the oppressed nations and oppressed people the world over. Chairman Mao led the Chinese people's revolution to victory which transformed the old semi-colonial and semi-feudal China into the new socialist China. All the victories of the Chinese people were achieved under the leadership of Chairman Mao; they are victories for Mao Tsetung thought. The radiance of Mao Tsetung thought will forever illuminate the road of advance of the Chinese people. Chairman Mao will live forever in the hearts of the Chinese people as well as of people all over the world.

39. Turning grief into strength, the entire Chinese people are determined to carry on the cause left behind by Chairman Mao and, following his behest, "act according to the principles laid down", continue to implement firmly his revolutionary line and policies in foreign affairs, adhere to proletarian internationalism, strengthen the militant unity between the people of our country and the people of other countries, particularly those of the third-world countries, unite with all the forces in the world that can be united and carry the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism through to the end. Loyal to the teachings of Chairman Mao, we will never seek hegemony and will never be a super-Power. We must strive to build our country into a powerful socialist State and make a greater contribution to humanity.

### AGENDA ITEM 3

Credentials of representatives to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly:

(a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee

40. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly at the beginning of each session shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members. Accordingly, I propose that, for the thirty-first session, the Credentials Committee should consist of the following Member States: China, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America and Zambia. I hear no objection, I shall take it that the countries I have

mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee.

*It was so decided.*

### AGENDA ITEM 100

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions

41. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/31/219, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing the Assembly that two Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the meaning of Article 19 of the Charter.

42. I have been informed that the permanent representatives of the Member States concerned have assured the Secretary-General that a remittance in the necessary amount is forthcoming.

43. I should also like to inform the Assembly that an understanding which resolves this matter in compliance with Article 19 of the Charter has been reached with the delegations of those Member States. The General Assembly will of course be kept informed of any new developments in this connexion.

### AGENDA ITEM 4

Election of the President

44. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now invite the members of the General Assembly to proceed to the election of the President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election will be held by secret ballot.

*At the invitation of the Temporary President, Mr. Ingvarsson (Iceland) and Mr. Heidweiller (Surinam) acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

Number of ballot papers:	141
Invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	140
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	138
Required majority:	70

*Number of votes obtained:*

Mr. Amerasinghe (Sri Lanka) . . . . .	135
Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia) . . . . .	1
Mr. Echeverría (Mexico) . . . . .	1
Mr. Kishia (Libyan Arab Republic) . . . . .	1

*Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe (Sri Lanka) was elected President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.*

45. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I most sincerely congratulate Mr. Amerasinghe, and I invite him to assume the presidency of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

*Mr. Amerasinghe took the Chair.*

*Address by Mr. Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe, President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly*

46. The PRESIDENT: The principle of equitable geographical rotation of the office of President of the General Assembly and the unflinching respect of the entire Assembly for the established convention of accepting the nomination presented by the geographical group concerned have combined to bring me to the position I occupy today as President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. My thanks are due primarily to the members of the Asian group of States for the trust and confidence in me they have displayed by making me their choice for the presidency.

47. To all you distinguished representatives and, through you, to your Governments I extend my thanks with the utmost sincerity for electing me as your President for this session of the General Assembly.

48. Without any pretence at modesty, I must confess that I regard my election not as a recognition of personal merit, but as an honour conferred on my country and as an acknowledgement of the positive and constructive impact of the policies of our Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sirimavo R. D. Bandaranaike on international affairs. These policies are founded on justice, good will and understanding in the search for harmony among nations.

49. I succeed to an office which has been adorned by statesmen and stateswomen of rare distinction and exceptional achievement not only in their own countries but also in the sphere of foreign relations. It is therefore with a deep sense of humility and a consciousness of my personal limitations that I assume this office.

50. It will be my constant endeavour to live up to your legitimate expectations and, as the rules of the General Assembly prescribe, to remain under your authority, which makes it my duty to ascertain the will of the Assembly and to be guided by it in the discharge of my responsibilities. I shall at all times act with complete impartiality and remain faithful to the Charter.

51. Last year we had the rare distinction of having a Prime Minister as our President. Mr. Gaston Thorn of Luxembourg has earned the thanks and approbation of us all for his smooth and efficient conduct of the work of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

52. Our distinguished Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, has continued to serve us with exemplary conscientiousness, industry and integrity. He has not spared himself in his efforts to use the prestige and authority of his office in order to preserve for the United Nations its proper role and status in international affairs.

53. In his exacting task the Secretary-General has been supported by a staff of international civil servants who have discharged their functions with complete loyalty to the Organization in consonance with the Charter. To them all I extend my profound thanks.

54. Although I miss the familiar figure of our former Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, Mr. Bradford Morse, who in every sense provided formidable support to the President and has deserved well of this Assembly, I am delighted to welcome a friend and colleague of long standing and a diplomat of wide experience, Under-Secretary-General William Buffum, on his first appearance at a session of the General Assembly. I trust that the satisfaction he will derive from the performance of his new duties will be as great as the benefit we shall derive from his services.

55. The world recently lost one of the most heroic figures of our times, Mao Tsetung, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China, the creator of modern China and the revered leader of the Chinese people. To the Government and people of the People's Republic of China and to his bereaved family I offer my sincere sympathy.

56. In addressing you as a national of Sri Lanka, I should like to stress the implications of, and the benefits we derive from, our association with the widest possible cross-section of nations in several distinctive groupings. Geographically we belong to the Asian group of States. With many countries in Asia we share the priceless legacy of an ancient culture and a long history of varied experience which has equipped us fully, more in the spiritual than in the material sense, to face the problems and trials of the world of today. Our continued association with the group of Commonwealth countries—once known as the British Commonwealth—gives us the advantage of consultation within a unique institution which, by the very reason of its heterogeneous composition, serves as an excellent forum for the harmonization of conflicting attitudes.

57. Economically we belong to perhaps the largest group of States functioning as such in the United Nations sphere of activities, the Group of 77—a numerical misnomer—which is an alliance for the advancement of the economic interests of developing countries through active co-operation, which is now directed primarily towards the establishment of the new international economic order and the fulfilment of the principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*]. Both these endeavours are designed to mitigate and ultimately eradicate the injustices and inequalities of the past and substitute for them a pattern of international economic co-operation based on equality that would bring justice and equity to all.

58. Finally, there is the group of non-aligned countries, which we helped found and which recently held its Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government in Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the presidency of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. We accord to our membership in this group a pre-eminent position because its principles and philosophy are aimed at the attainment of the supreme objective of the United Nations, the maintenance of international peace and

security. The foreign policy of my country is irrevocably committed to non-alignment.

59. Non-alignment had its genesis in the political situation created by the Second World War, a situation in which two power blocs, obsessed with mutual suspicion and hostility and sharply divided by ideology, strove to surpass each other in military power and competed for influence and support among the uncommitted nations. Non-alignment has met with a great measure of success in safeguarding and promoting the independence and sovereignty of all nations, large and small. The prospects of international peace have been vastly enhanced by increasing adherence to the principles and policy of non-alignment, which categorically rejects the concepts of balance of power and spheres of influence. If its authority is to grow progressively, the members of the group must remain ever faithful to its tenets.

60. With the thirty-first session, the General Assembly enters upon the last quarter of the twentieth century. There has been no other period in the history of the human race which could claim such a glittering record of achievement in scientific progress but which has also been besmirched by such savage destruction of human life and property in two world wars and other no less brutal conflicts and by the most infamous affronts to the dignity of the human personality in the name of ethnic superiority.

61. Even as the secrets of the universe unfold themselves to the penetrating scrutiny of the fecund and versatile genius of human science, the legitimate expectation that the advance of technology would produce a corresponding degree of progress in the solution of the political, social and economic problems that beset the international community has fallen far short of even modest realization.

62. During the 31 years of its existence, the United Nations has advanced steadily towards the attainment of the ideal of universality of membership. In 1945 it counted 51 countries among its Members. Today we expect the one hundred and forty-fifth Member to be admitted. Almost three fourths of the countries admitted to membership since 1945 were once under colonial rule. This has resulted in a radical change in the pattern of voting which has formed the subject of caustic and even offensive criticism. An indulgent observer may explain this reaction as attributable to frustration, but it fails to show a proper appreciation of the sensibilities of those who constitute the majority. If the criticism were treated as only a natural human reaction to a loss of influence it could have been dismissed without comment. But when it is taken into the realm of political theory and the behaviour of the so-called new majority is ascribed to irrational antagonism or partisanship and a repudiation of principles, the charge should not go unanswered.

63. The Charter expresses the determination of the peoples of the United Nations to practise tolerance, which implies mutual respect for different political and economic systems. The nations that have chosen the democratic system of government are too prone to claim that the system automatically endows them exclusively with the virtues of infallibility of judgement and impeccability of conduct. This is a presumptuous claim. What is most

important is that in the conduct of international relations a nation is governed and guided by the principles of the international covenants and instruments to which it has subscribed and whose purpose is the maintenance of international peace and justice in the interests of orderly human progress and well-being. It is not by the manner in which it votes on a particular issue that a Member has to be judged, but by the sum of its actions and its policies and the effect those actions and policies have on the aims and objectives of the Charter and on the lives of others affected by such actions and policies.

64. Last year in the General Assembly 123 nations asked the Security Council to admit the two Viet Nams to membership in the United Nations [see resolution 3366 (XXX)]. This year the two Viet Nams have sought admission as one country, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. After 30 years of bitter fratricidal conflict during which they were a divided nation they have succeeded in achieving their unification through the free will of their people. This is a unique and unparalleled achievement during the post-Second World War era and by itself establishes beyond cavil their credentials. They have demonstrated clearly their intention and capacity to discharge the obligations of a Member of the United Nations.

65. For more than 25 years the United Nations has devoted much of its attention to political problems. Many of those problems still plague us and are an imminent threat to international peace and security. The United Nations cannot relax its vigilance. The scourge of *apartheid* and the repressive measures adopted by the white minority régimes in southern Africa have brought the world to the brink of disaster, which can only be averted by honest, resolute and united action on the part of the entire United Nations membership, especially the countries best placed to influence those offending and offensive régimes.

66. In the Middle East, a state of tension continues as the occupied population becomes increasingly restive and desperate. The agreements on the disengagement of forces on the Sinai and Suez and the Golan Heights have provided a respite and offered some hope of progress towards a just and honourable settlement. This result can be achieved if all parties to the dispute accept without qualification certain elements as indispensable to a final settlement. None of these elements commands priority; they form a composite whole. One of them is the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war. The acceptance of this principle would require Israel to withdraw its armed forces from territories occupied by it as a result of war. Another element is the acknowledgement, both in policy and in practice, of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and of the right of every State in the Middle East, including the State of Israel, to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from the threat or use of force. This does not, however, mean that the expression "secure and recognized boundaries" entitles any State to determine for itself what those boundaries should be.

67. The third and perhaps the most important element is the need for restoring to the Arab people of Palestine their legitimate rights, which will give them a separate Palestinian State as provided for and endorsed by the United Nations

in the partition agreement of 1947 [*resolution 181 (II)*]. It is only by ensuring for the Palestinians the exercise of their right of self-determination and giving them a national home and State that the United Nations can terminate the harrowing ordeal of a people who have been condemned to refugee camps for more than 28 years.

68. The policy of annexation and of the establishment of permanent settlements in the occupied territories cannot but create serious misgivings as to Israeli intentions in regard to the future of the occupied territories. The right of every State to live within secure and recognized boundaries cannot be construed as conferring on the State of Israel the special prerogative of determining at its own discretion where those boundaries should be established as a means of ensuring its security. The exercise of such a right by all nations in general would plunge the world into chaos. I have stated before and I take this opportunity of stating again that the question of safe and secure boundaries is a matter for negotiation but that it cannot be divorced from the recognition of the right of Israel to exist as a State or from the renunciation of belligerency. No boundary drawn on the ground can serve as a guarantee of security. Peace and friendship are the sole guarantees, and they can exist only in the hearts and minds of peoples and, more especially, their leaders.

69. The events in southern Africa, especially the increasing death toll in townships such as Soweto, are a presage of dire catastrophe. The white minority régimes of South Africa and of Rhodesia must come to their senses or must be brought to their senses by concerted action on the part of those who believe in civilized conduct.

70. In Cyprus there has, unhappily, been no progress towards a peaceful settlement that would preserve the integrity of Cyprus as a single State. It is to be hoped that the apprehensions of the minority can be allayed without destroying the territorial integrity of that island and that a formula can be found that will enable the communities to live in harmony with each other as one people and one nation.

71. It is impossible within the compass of a statement of this nature to cover the numerous other political issues that will come before this session. I have drawn attention only to those which constitute a grave threat to international peace and security.

72. The items on disarmament increase from year to year. Progress in the matter of disarmament is in inverse ratio to the time spent on the question by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the two Co-Chairmen of that Conference. Every year a new item which has little to do with the heart of the problem is brought before the Assembly. The time has come for the General Assembly as a whole to take up this issue, whether in a special session or in a world conference. We should liberate ourselves from the fallacy that war can be prevented by a reduction in armaments. It is this fallacy that has proved the greatest impediment to real disarmament. A new and positive approach is needed. It is the causes of war that should be eliminated if preparation for war is to be avoided.

73. World military expenditure in 1975 at current prices amounted to about \$US 300 billion, which, in terms of

constant 1970 prices, would amount to approximately \$US 230 billion. Since the end of the Second World War, the total world military expenditure has amounted to \$US 4,500 billion at constant 1970 prices. This figure is regarded as a conservative estimate.

74. World military expenditure in 1975 was equivalent to the total gross national product of 65 countries in Latin America and in Africa. The time and effort devoted by the two most powerful nations at working out an equation of their relative military strength could be put to better use by an examination of the reasons for their engaging in this frenzied competition to produce even more sophisticated and more lethal weapons. Growing military strength, far from preventing a war and ensuring security, could provoke a war that would bring the combatants to the point of extinction and consign all humanity to oblivion.

75. It took the United Nations more than 25 years to realize that the solution of economic problems could provide a key to the easing of political tension. The First United Nations Development Decade was no more than a modest start. The real turning-point came with the sixth special session on the subject of raw materials and development, convened at the imaginative initiative of President Boumediène of Algeria. That session produced the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolution 3201 (S-VI)*] and a Programme of Action relating to it [*resolution 3202 (S-VI)*]. The inability of certain powerful developed market economy countries to subscribe in its entirety to the latter resolution should not, however, discourage our efforts to bring into being a new and more equitable international economic order. To fail to do so would only be to perpetuate an order that, even when it was working at what appeared to be its best, did not serve the interests of the developing world.

76. The Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order was soon reinforced by the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted in General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX). These instruments were further complemented and reinforced by the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation adopted at the Second General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization [*UNIDO*] in March 1975,<sup>4</sup> as well as by the resolutions adopted at the fourth session of UNCTAD at Nairobi in May 1976.<sup>5</sup>

77. The most striking achievement of the fourth session of UNCTAD was the acceptance of the principle and the bases of negotiation in three crucial sectors of international trade and development, namely, primary commodities, manufactures and technology.

78. The integrated programme for commodities, contained in resolution 93 (IV) adopted at Nairobi, of which the principal element is the common fund for financing buffer stocks, forms the core of our effort to restructure the trade in primary commodities. A happy augury for the success of that effort was the pledge made by 14 developed market-

<sup>4</sup> See document A/10112, chap. IV.

<sup>5</sup> See document TD/217.

economy countries, immediately after its adoption in Nairobi, of their support for that resolution. A few of the most powerful developed market economy countries entered reservations on the integrated programme, but it is to be hoped that these reservations will be withdrawn as the programme of commodity consultations launched by UNCTAD gets under way. Self-reliance is more consistent with the dignity and self-respect of developing countries than continuing dependence on the charity and capricious benevolence of the developed countries.

79. In the area of manufactures, UNCTAD at its fourth session has given its approval to an over-all strategy for manufactures which takes into account the main objectives of the UNIDO Conference at Lima. In the area of technological development, there is now agreement to negotiate a code of conduct for the transfer of technology, as well as a commitment to strengthen the technological capacity of developing countries.

80. There is, however, an important area of immediate and critical concern to the developing countries, particularly those most adversely affected, where UNCTAD at its fourth session gave little or no satisfaction to the developing world. I refer to the area of money and finance, where no progress was made on solutions to the pressing financial problems created in a large number of developing countries by the sharp decline in commodity prices or on adequate measures to give prompt relief to developing countries burdened with critical debt problems or on measures for the transfer of adequate resources from those in possession of them to those who need them. In this area the only satisfaction given to the developing world was an agreement to continue the dialogue. There is, however, a glimmer of hope in this agreement.

81. One of the great challenges of our time, and a task with which I have had the privilege of being very closely associated, is the establishment of a new international régime for the world's oceans. This co-operative endeavour is, in scope, complexity and impact, without parallel in history. A universally acceptable international agreement regulating the use of such a vast area of the earth's surface, and assuring to all countries, rich and poor alike, an equitable share of its wealth, would be an outstanding contribution to the rational, just and stable order, both political and economic, which the United Nations is striving to create. The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which only last Friday concluded its fifth session inconclusively, and the preceding deliberations have now been going on for 10 years. Although some areas of contention have been narrowed down to the point where agreement appears to be within reach, on many issues of a fundamental nature there are still sharp divergencies among the participants. We have reached a stage where the successful conclusion of an agreement could be imperilled by impetuous and precipitate action. We have, one and all, an obligation to act with extreme caution and patience and with a proper appreciation of the unthinkable risks and consequences of failure. It is my hope that we shall be able to look back with satisfaction on the 1970s not merely as having encompassed a decade of the oceans but as having seen the creation of a new spirit of understanding and co-operation among the nations of the world.

82. On all sides it is recognized that, as more and more nations attain the status of sovereign and independent countries, the interdependence of nations in every sphere of international activity grows. It is not within the capacity of a single country or a group of countries, however powerful they may be militarily and economically, to find complete solutions to current international problems independently of the rest of the international community. This requires a joint and collective effort in an atmosphere of concord and good will, inspired by the determination to subordinate narrow sectarian and selfish aims, whether at the national or international level, to the Benthamite ideal of the greatest good of the greatest number.

83. We have a heavy agenda, but I am confident that I can rely absolutely on the help and support of representatives in approaching all our problems in a disciplined and statesmanlike manner and so prove to the world that the United Nations is fully aware of its responsibilities and is determined to live up to them.

84. The United Nations system provides a unique forum for establishing a bond of unity in the pursuit of a common purpose among the nations of the world and for deriving from that unity fresh vigour and strength. But the strength derived from unity requires to be governed by a discipline that will lead us all to the objectives we so devoutly desire to attain. In stressing this principle, which I consider to be vital to the success of our efforts, I echo the words of the Sakyamuni, Gauthama Buddha, the sage whose teachings have had such a profound influence on the lives of the people of my country, as of many other countries in Asia, who once said: "Sammaganam tapō sukhō" - "Happy is the discipline of those who are united." It is with that message that I wish to conclude my address today.

## AGENDA ITEM 26

### Admission of new Members to the United Nations

85. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the procedure followed in the past, I should now like to invite the General Assembly to consider, under item 26 of the provisional agenda, the positive recommendation by the Security Council in document A/31/176 for the admission to membership in the United Nations of the Republic of Seychelles. This special procedure has been applied previously in order to give any State recently recommended by the Security Council for membership in our Organization the opportunity, if the General Assembly acts favourably on the request, to participate from the outset in the work of the session. If there is no objection, we shall proceed in this manner.

*It was so decided.*

86. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council has recommended the admission of the Republic of Seychelles in document A/31/176. In this connexion a draft resolution has been submitted in document A/31/L.1 and Add.1 and 2. May I take it that the General Assembly accepts the recommendation of the Security Council and adopts the draft resolution by acclamation?

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 31/1).*

87. The PRESIDENT: I declare the Republic of Seychelles admitted to membership in the United Nations.

*The delegation of the Republic of Seychelles was escorted to its place in the General Assembly hall.*

88. The PRESIDENT: I am sure that all members of this Assembly rejoice at the admission of the Republic of Seychelles to membership in the United Nations. I extend a cordial welcome to the delegation of Seychelles to the United Nations and wish its people the blessings of peace, progress and happiness.

89. It is appropriate that I should, at the same time, congratulate the Government of the United Kingdom on its further demonstration of its adherence to the principle of self-determination.

90. Several representatives have expressed a desire to speak at this juncture. I call first on the representative of Malawi, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

91. Mr. MUWAMBA (Malawi): In coming to the podium to welcome the new State of Seychelles, I wish, on behalf of the African group of States, to extend to you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the thirty-first regular session of the United Nations General Assembly. The African group, of which I have the singular privilege of representing as Chairman of the current month, is proud of your contribution to the work of this august body and is therefore happy and delighted to see you grace that office. The African group recalls the distinguished role you have played and are continuing to play in the adjourned Conference on the Law of the Sea. It is therefore the hope and prayer of my Group that you will bring to the thirty-first regular session of the General Assembly the same wisdom, understanding and dedication which you generously placed at the disposal of the adjourned Conference. Above all, it gives the African group a great sense of pride and satisfaction that the third world should, within a period of two years, be privileged once again to provide positive and dynamic leadership for the highest international body. Accordingly, the African group can do no more than assure you of its unflinching support and co-operate throughout the duration of the current session.

92. It will be recalled that one of the priorities which the African group has set itself at the United Nations is, you will agree, the total elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism where they exist in any form. Therefore, the African group feels excited and inspired to note that the official opening of the thirty-first regular session also marks the admission to membership in this world body of the Indian Ocean Republic of Seychelles on the continent of Africa. Accordingly, on behalf of both the African group and my own country, Malawi, I wish to join all those who have extended and will extend congratulations to President James Mancham, the Government and people of that young Republic on their well-earned and well-deserved independence.

93. The African group is particularly happy at the fact that the transfer of power there has taken place without any ugly incidents, thereby ensuring the continued eco-

nomie and social development of the young Republic. In this connexion, the African group would like to extend to the former colonial Power, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, our very hearty congratulations for being sincere and true to the spirit of the agreement reached to extend to that Republic the desired independence and sovereignty.

94. My own country has had occasion to work with Seychelles as a Commonwealth member country since the British occupation of that country. I recall, for instance, that I personally had occasion to visit the Republic in 1972 when I flew to Mahé on the Air Malawi inaugural flight. I was privileged to be received by the President himself and one of his senior Cabinet Ministers. It is my sincere hope, therefore, that the relationship between the two Republics will wax from strength to strength, to their mutual benefit.

95. The African group notes with great satisfaction the commitment by the Seychelles Government to the policy of non-alignment, as well as its determination not to create a climate in the Indian Ocean capable of attracting big-Power confrontation. As that commitment reflects the Organization of African Unity's desire for peace and determination to achieve human dignity and equality for the people of Africa, representatives can well understand my group's joy on the admission of our sister African country to membership in this august body. Therefore, we look forward to working side by side with our brothers and sisters from Seychelles until our goal has been realized.

96. Finally, in extending a warm welcome to our brothers and sisters of the Seychelles, I should like to say that the African group at the United Nations strongly believes that their admission to the United Nations will enable them to make a useful and positive contribution to the efforts and activities of the world body in the promotion of world peace and justice.

97. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Bhutan, who will speak on behalf of the Asian States.

98. Mr. TSHERING (Bhutan): Mr. President, my Foreign Minister will be participating in the general debate and I am quite sure that he would like personally to express his felicitations on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly. In the meantime, it is most opportune for me, in my capacity as Chairman of the Asian group of States and on behalf of my own delegation, to extend our warmest congratulations on your election as President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

99. It gives me great pleasure indeed to see a distinguished citizen from the same subcontinent of Asia occupying the high post of President and it is a fitting tribute also to your ancient country. We are very happy because we are familiar with you by now in your important roles in various *ad hoc* committees and as President of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, in which you have already demonstrated your wisdom, tact and skill. Those qualities reaffirm our confidence that the Assembly at this session will be able to tackle successfully the problems that will come before it.

100. I should also like to take this opportunity to convey our warmest appreciation and congratulations to your

predecessor, Prime Minister Gaston Thorn of Luxembourg, for the manner in which he so successfully guided the proceedings of the thirtieth session.

101. On 18 August 1976, His Majesty the King of Bhutan, while addressing the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Colombo, welcomed the accession to independence of the Republic of Seychelles and its entry into the family of the non-aligned movement. It is now with great pleasure and honour that I, as Chairman of the Asian group of States, and on behalf of my own delegation, welcome the admission of the Republic of Seychelles to membership in the United Nations. The Kingdom of Bhutan respects the important principle of self-determination as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In the present case, we welcome the collective efforts of the people of Seychelles, the former administering Power, the United Kingdom, and the Special Committee on decolonization, whose efforts successfully and peacefully brought about the independence of the Republic of Seychelles. We believe that constitutes great progress in the efforts of our Organization and offers one more proof of the fact that decolonization efforts of the United Nations are bearing fruit.

102. The admission to membership of the Republic of Seychelles is an act in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter and strengthens the goal of universality of the United Nations. The Kingdom of Bhutan is fully committed to the goal of universality of the membership of the United Nations. It is our sincere hope that, as in the case of Seychelles, other States which are still outside this great Organization, will be admitted as full members in complete conformity and compliance with the principles of our Organization.

103. We wish the Republic of Seychelles every success in realizing the aspirations of the people and in their efforts at nation-building. We also look forward to working in close co-operation with the Seychelles in the belief that the Republic of Seychelles will make great contributions to the work of our Organization.

104. Before concluding, I should like also to associate myself with the sentiments that were expressed at the opening of the session on the sad demise of Chairman Mao Tsetung. Chairman Mao Tsetung was a poet, a philosopher and a beloved leader of his people. He was also the architect of the modern history of China and devoted his life completely to his country. His devotion and outstanding statesmanship will long be remembered not only in his own country and in Asia but throughout the world. The Kingdom of Bhutan is an immediate neighbour of the People's Republic of China, and I should like once again on behalf of the Asian group of States and on behalf of my own delegation to convey to the representative of China, and through him to his delegation and Government and to the bereaved family, our sincere condolences and sympathy at their great loss.

105. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Romania, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

106. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): Sir, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my

country will have the pleasure, on behalf of the Government of Romania, to congratulate you on your election as President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly and extend to you the congratulations of the delegation of Romania. However, I should like to avail myself of this happy and solemn occasion to express to you once again my personal feelings of esteem and friendship, to wish you complete success in the discharge of the lofty responsibilities entrusted to you and to assure you that you will have the complete co-operation of the delegation of Romania.

107. The General Assembly has just admitted by acclamation a new Member State, the Republic of Seychelles, to the family of the United Nations. I should like, on behalf of the countries of Eastern Europe, to offer on this occasion our warmest congratulations to the representatives of that country.

108. The entry of the Republic of Seychelles to the United Nations is yet another practical confirmation of the right of all peoples to be represented in this world forum and it is, at the same time, a new step towards complete universality of our Organization.

109. We rejoice at this event, which gives us an opportunity to express our most sincere conviction that the Republic of Seychelles will make a valuable contribution to the development of international co-operation within the fields of activity of the United Nations, while benefiting from international co-operation and the support of our Organization.

110. The admission of the Republic of Seychelles to the United Nations once again illustrates the role and the importance which all peoples that love peace and justice accord to the United Nations. This is proof that the international community still considers the United Nations to be a vital and irreplaceable instrument for co-operation among all States, as equals in rights and in duties.

111. It is up to all of us not to disappoint those who place their hopes for peace and progress in the United Nations. This is the central idea which should guide our political will towards the achievement of the universality of the United Nations, by admitting all States which apply and which meet all the conditions provided for in the Charter, both in their words and in their deeds.

112. Every step such as the one we have taken today brings mankind closer to the end of a shameful chapter in its history, marked by colonialism and imperialist domination. We are coming closer to the day when the last remaining peoples still subject to colonial domination will, by their arduous struggle, conquer the legitimate and inalienable right to freedom, to life and to national and human dignity.

113. We are happy to note that this course is marked by the efforts undertaken within our Organization, the most important of which was the adoption in 1960 of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [*resolution 1514 (XV)*]. It is now the duty of all of us to redouble our efforts in solidarity, so that we shall as soon as possible put an end to colonialist and neo-colonialist practices which still persist throughout the world and build a better world.

114. Inspired by these thoughts, we should like to express to the representatives of the Republic of Seychelles our wishes for complete success in the consolidation of the independence of their country as well as in their international activities, so as to realize the aspirations of their people for peace, progress and prosperity.

115. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of El Salvador, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American States.

116. Mr. GALINDO POHL (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, may I first of all say to you what a tremendous satisfaction it is for the Latin American group of States and my country, El Salvador, that you have today been elected President of the General Assembly for its thirty-first session. Your long and fruitful activities in United Nations forums constitute the best qualifications for your investiture today.

117. The General Assembly has just admitted the Republic of Seychelles as the one hundred and forty-fifth Member of the United Nations, a decision to which the delegations of the Latin American group have given their unanimous consent.

118. By its very nature, and because of its objectives, the United Nations has to be an organization of universal composition in which all States, without any distinction of any kind, hold dialogues, debate and co-ordinate activities. Since the objectives of the United Nations are world-wide and the problems of peace, security and development are indivisible, the United Nations must of necessity give an opportunity to all States to assume their share of responsibility in the common tasks and in the attainment of objectives freely agreed to.

119. The United Nations has at the international level substantially changed the system of international relations which preceded the two world wars and which afflicted the generations of the twentieth century and, in accordance with its philosophy and objectives, all members of the international community, all States which can be considered members of the international community have, owing to the interdependence in which we live, the right to participate and the duty to contribute.

120. The Republic of Seychelles will enrich this international forum. Even though its independence became formal very recently, its social, historic and cultural personality has been long established. It is cause for rejoicing when a new Member of the United Nations gives proof by its presence that the last vestiges of colonialism are truly disintegrating and that the United Nations is taking further steps towards universality.

121. The Latin American group, on whose behalf I extend the warmest welcome to Seychelles, will seek every opportunity to create closer ties of friendship and co-operation with this new Member and friend, in the common endeavour to organize international relations on the basis of justice and progress. The agreed objective is specific: to ensure for future generations peaceful enjoyment of the development of science and technology and to recognize to all peoples of the world their inalienable right to organize

their political and economic life and to develop their own personality in an atmosphere of respect and co-operation. What I have said on behalf of the Latin American group is also meant on behalf of my country, El Salvador.

122. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Iceland, who will speak on behalf of the group of Western European and other States.

123. Mr. INGVARSSON (Iceland): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to extend to you, on behalf of the group of Western European and other States, the warmest congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly. I wish to add my personal best wishes. Your election is a great tribute to your country and to your personal qualities and great experience in the affairs of the United Nations. We look forward to working under your able guidance and we assure you of our co-operation.

124. May I also express our profound thanks and appreciation to our former President, Mr. Gaston Thorn, who discharged his heavy duties as President of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly in an exemplary manner and with wisdom and tact.

125. As Chairman of the group of Western European and other States, I am happy to welcome the admission of the Republic of Seychelles to membership in the United Nations. We are gratified that this Organization is moving closer to its goal of complete universality.

126. We look forward to fruitful co-operation with this our newest Member and to its contribution to the work of our Organization.

127. Speaking as the representative of a small country, I am pleased to assure the delegation of Seychelles that smaller Members have an important and positive role to play in the United Nations.

128. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Yemen, who will speak on behalf of the Arab States.

129. Mr. SALLAM (Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): First, Mr. President, I should like on behalf of the Arab group of States to welcome you and congratulate you on your accession to the presidency of this session of the General Assembly.

130. I should like also on behalf of the Arab group, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has become a full-fledged member of the Arab League, to express our sincerest and warmest congratulations to the Republic of Seychelles on its admission to our Organization. We congratulate that young State which has just become a Member of our international Organization. We congratulate the international community also on its firm and constant support for the liberation of oppressed peoples, some of which are still suffering under the yoke of imperialism and foreign domination. Our international community views with sympathy the development of the situation in those countries that have not yet acceded to freedom and independence. The international community wishes to see the peoples that are still under the domination of imperialism occupy their places among us as Members of

this great Organization, so that the United Nations may become universal, thereby fulfilling one of its main purposes: the establishment of international co-operation, justice and equality among peoples, on the basis of respect for man's dignity and his right to live in peace in any part of the world.

131. The Arab group congratulates the Republic of Seychelles, this young State that has now become a Member of our Organization. At the same time, we congratulate ourselves on the realization of another objective of the United Nations, which develops friendly relations and equal rights among peoples, with self-determination for all.

132. On behalf of the Arab group, I welcome among us the representatives of the Republic of Seychelles, which has won its independence by means of its constant struggle and its unending patience.

133. I would take this opportunity to state on behalf of the Arab group that we deeply mourn the passing of Chairman Mao Tsetung. We extend our condolences to the great Chinese people. This is a loss not only for China but for all peace-loving and freedom-loving peoples.

134. I started this statement by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your accession to your high post. May I conclude it by repeating our congratulations to you, on behalf of the Arab group.

135. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of the United States of America, the host country.

136. Mr. SCRANTON (United States of America): My delegation wishes to add its condolences to the people of the People's Republic of China on the passing of Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao was a historic figure who changed the course of events in the world and who had a tremendous impact on the present and the future of his country. As President Ford has noted, Chairman Mao's influence on history extended far beyond the borders of China itself. My country joined together with his to establish positive and fruitful relations, and together our countries promise to contribute to world peace and to its stability. All of us here, I am sure, echo these sentiments for a world at peace; they can serve as an inspiration for our work in the United Nations to strive for a peaceful and secure world. I share these sentiments deeply and should like to express my personal condolences to my Chinese colleagues.

137. As representative of the host country for the United Nations, I offer sincere congratulations on the occasion of the accession to membership in our Organization of the Republic of Seychelles. The United States delegation had the pleasure of supporting the Seychelles' application at the time of its consideration in the Security Council, on 16 August.

138. The dedication of the people of Seychelles to the goals which we all share, of peace, freedom and the welfare of mankind, surely will facilitate our joint task. For our part, we assure our newest Member of the full co-operation and assistance of the United States delegation.

139. It is a very special pleasure that my initial statement in the General Assembly should be to welcome a new Member to the United Nations. It is a further satisfaction to be making it with so distinguished a statesman presiding over this great gathering. Many congratulations to you too, Mr. President, on your assumption of office. In the year 1976 you have presided over two sessions of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. In the same year there has been the non-aligned Conference in your home country, Sri Lanka. And now you are President of the thirty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. I would make only one comment: what a remarkable year for an extraordinary man!

140. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

141. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom): Mr. President, when he speaks in the course of the general debate the leader of my delegation, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, will be expressing his pleasure at your assumption of the presidency. May I, however, take this early opportunity of expressing my personal congratulations on your election to this distinguished office. We are particularly pleased that the representative of a fellow Commonwealth country and a firm supporter of the Commonwealth ideal should be in the chair. You add your own particular touch of elegance. I only regret that the flower shops of New York were not able to provide me with a flower from your native Sri Lanka to match the English rose which you regularly sport with so much grace. You bring a wealth of experience, both hard-won and recent, to the presidency. For your sake, I hope that you will find us an easier lot to deal with than the representatives to the Conference on the Law of the Sea.

142. It is with the greatest pleasure that the United Kingdom welcomes the Republic of Seychelles as the newest Member of the United Nations. We have already had an opportunity during the debate in the Security Council on the admission of Seychelles to express satisfaction at the accession to independence of another British Non-Self-Governing Territory. We treasure the 160 years of friendship between our two communities and we look forward to developing a close but equal association in the years ahead.

143. Seychelles has already taken its place in international affairs through its membership in the Commonwealth and in the Organization of African Unity. It is now the turn of the United Nations to have the benefit of the fresh and vigorous ideas of this new nation-State. We look forward to close co-operation with the delegation of Seychelles. The country may be small but it has its own valuable contribution to make to the affairs of the region and the world as a whole. It has historical ties not only with my country but with France. It is a splendid example of multiracialism where people of African, Indian, Chinese and European blood all contribute to make Seychelles the fascinating place that it is. We wish them all well.

144. We are particularly happy to do so in the presence of the distinguished President of Seychelles, Mr. James Mancham. It affords me personally particular pleasure to welcome Mr. Mancham. I met him first in San Francisco some five years ago, when he was in the course of one of his

good-will tours, which have done so much to put his country on the map. Two years ago I accompanied him on a courtesy call on the Secretary-General, when, with the good-humoured eloquence that he commands, he explained to Mr. Waldheim that, whatever some theorists might think about the problem of the so-called mini-States, Seychelles fully intended to become a member of the United Nations and to play a full part therein.

145. Much can be said about the statesmanlike way in which the Seychelles people have proceeded to independence. I should like to do no more on this occasion than to pay a tribute to the wisdom of the leaders of the two main political parties, President Mancham and Prime Minister René, who last year formed a coalition Government. We pledge the Seychelles Government the full co-operation and support of my Government in the years that lie ahead, and in earnest of this we have already agreed to provide economic and technical assistance for the development of the Seychelles.

146. May I finally add that this happy occasion marks the culmination of three years of co-operation between my own delegation and the Special Committee on decolonization under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Salim. We share a common belief in the principle of self-determination. I think also that there is now a greater awareness of the particular problems of our remaining small dependent Territories, and we look forward to continuing our constructive exchanges.

147. May I also add, Sir, that my delegation much appreciated your own generous reference and those of other representatives to the role of the United Kingdom in bringing our former dependent Territories to independence.

148. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh): At the outset I should like on behalf of the people of Bangladesh, my Government and myself to express deep grief and sincerest condolences at the passing away of the great leader Mao Tsetung, a giant among men and an immortal.

149. It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the people and Government of Bangladesh to welcome into the fold of the international community Seychelles as the one hundred and forty-fifth Member State of the United Nations. Bangladesh is particularly committed to the goal of universality of membership, and the admission of Seychelles marks another important step in the fulfilment of this eminently desirable objective.

150. As a newly emerging developing country, an Indian Ocean neighbour and a sister Commonwealth nation, we have close ties of affinity and friendship with Seychelles and their valiant people, a bond which we are confident will grow ever stronger, particularly through our participation in the work of the United Nations. We look forward to working in close and friendly co-operation with the representatives of Seychelles in reaching the common goals and aspirations of our peoples and Governments.

151. May I also take this opportunity to express our pleasure at seeing you, Mr. President, preside over the deliberations of this august Assembly. Your election is an eloquent tribute not only to your illustrious country Sri

Lanka but also to the continent of Asia, to which we both belong. We extend to you our sincere congratulations and felicitations on your election. As that of a statesman of wide experience and proven ability, your name and reputation are familiar and respected throughout the world. You bring to this high office an outstanding record of dedicated work in the service of your country and the United Nations itself in the cause of international understanding and co-operation. We are confident that under your astute guidance, wisdom and diplomatic skill, the deliberations of this Assembly will be brought to a successful conclusion.

152. Sir Harold WALTER (Mauritius) (*interpretation from French*): Sir, I should first of all like to congratulate you upon your election to the presidency of this august Assembly. But at the same time I would remind you of the immortal lesson of Shakespeare, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

153. Secondly, I should like to extend my sincere condolences to the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China at the great sorrow that has afflicted his country in particular and the world in general. I hope that the distinguished representative will find a great deal of comfort in the words of the poet, because they apply particularly to the great man who has lately left us: "The man may disappear, but his work remains."

154. As Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity I greet with legitimate pride the Republic of Seychelles on its admission to the United Nations. Also, in my capacity as representative of a neighbouring State of the Republic of Seychelles, with which we have common interests and a long historical association as well as legal and cultural bonds, and on behalf of my Prime Minister and Head of Government, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, and the people of Mauritius, I take pleasure at this great honour which has fallen to the Republic of Seychelles. We congratulate that country.

155. Great Britain warrants our admiration and praise for having with faith and determination pursued its policy of decolonization. We rightly appreciate the liberation of a quarter of the world's population, 800 million souls, in an act of faith which deserves our congratulations.

156. I wish the young Republic of Seychelles a new era of prosperity and peace.

157. The PRESIDENT: It is now my pleasure to invite the President of the Republic of Seychelles, His Excellency Mr. James R. Mancham, to address the General Assembly.

158. Mr. MANCHAM (President of the Republic of Seychelles): Sir, first let me congratulate you on your assumption of the office of President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. I have no doubt that you will bring a wealth of experience to the discharge of the heavy burden which lies on you from today.

159. Let me now thank all Member States that have spoken today for all the complimentary remarks they have made on Seychelles' achievement of independence as a

sovereign republic and on our becoming the one hundred and forty-fifth Member of the United Nations. In fact, it was for me also a matter of great pride and satisfaction to read the account of the debate which took place on 16 August, when the question of our admission was being discussed by the Security Council.<sup>6</sup>

160. On looking at our past, I note that we were a French colony for 40 years, and a British colony for 160. As a matter of fact, it is the French who started the human experience in our country, and the French impact survives to this day. Britain, which took over from the French, has guided us with an attitude of friendly enlightenment over the years, and in this spirit readily and unreservedly granted us independence on 29 June this year.

161. It would, therefore, be ungenerous were I not to pay a particular tribute to the United Kingdom for all it has done for my country and for the generous spirit in which it has forwarded our progress to independence, as well as for the generous economic assistance it is providing us in this very crucial period of taking off.

162. In considering the question of whether or not my small country should apply for membership in the United Nations I realize that one of the conditions for acceptance into this noble Organization is a commitment to the love of peace. This, translated into the beautiful language of modern diplomacy, should make us what is known as "another peace-loving State". I believe it is incumbent on me today to say a few words about the modest role which my country expects to play in the complex affairs of this vast world.

163. Seychelles is an archipelago of 92 small islands scattered over an extensive surface of the Indian Ocean. On the day of our independence we inherited a defenceless shore—no army, no navy, no air force and no treaty of defence whatsoever—our only weapon being our eternal smile. Against this background I have stated that our Government would follow a policy of friendship to all, and enemy to none—sometimes described as a policy of being neither on the left nor on the right but straight forward.

164. In the speeches delivered in the Security Council debate the multiracialism prevailing in our islands was especially commented upon. I am of the firm conviction that in this increasingly troublesome time, when the risks of new conflicts multiply and their causes diversify, the Republic of Seychelles represents an oasis in what seems to be becoming, if we do not stop it, an immense desert of misunderstandings directed towards continuing misgivings, dissensions and hatred. I believe, therefore, that our contribution to world peace must be in that vital area—that is, to remain what we are, a shining example of the fact that different races of this world can indeed live and work together in the unifying spirit of love for others.

165. We in Seychelles must be thankful to God that there is very little hate in our hearts, that we have never been the direct subject of war or armed struggle, that we have no hostile neighbour and only a wide ocean as immediate

frontier. In fact, I will hasten to say that even the colonialism which we have known has been totally non-repressive and very benevolent. In such a situation we can perhaps therefore afford to look objectively towards the big world outside and ask, What is all this fratricide; what is all this division and this madness of men all about?

166. I think the time has come when we must ask ourselves what will make the world a sane world. It is evident that only sane people can make the world a sane world—and among these people, to begin with, those of us who have assumed responsibility for our people. And if indeed we want a peaceful world, who else to bring this about but leaders who have peace in their minds?

167. For too long the notion has persisted in human beings that a state of sanity and peace can somehow be produced by armed struggle and violence. That the end justifies the means is a lie which has been swallowed by almost everyone. It would be much more accurate to say that the end reveals the means.

168. We do not have to look very far or very closely to see that there are simple and natural laws which work as surely in human affairs as they do in the rest of creation. If you sow a mango seed you get a mango tree. If you sow maize you get maize. No exception to this simple law has ever occurred or ever will. By the same token, if you sow the seed of contention, the seed of violence and hatred, the harvest will be more contention, more violence and more hatred.

169. Society can only change by first changing the attitude of people who live in it—among whom, to begin with, I repeat, the attitude of those who have the responsibility to guide and to lead those people. To guide and to lead the people where? Towards progress—which means peace—which is, after all, an essential condition for real, true, lasting progress.

170. Perhaps the Republic of Seychelles, small as it is, can start to give an example of much needed universal change. I hope that in becoming the one hundred and forty-fifth Member of this international community, Seychelle's example, however modest it may be, will be able somehow to influence this sadly divided world towards finding the right solutions of the many problems which confront it on all sides. The United Nations has a duty to help the Seychelles remain that light at the end of the tunnel which it believes itself to be, that small light of hope for peace and love among all the peoples of southern Africa, among all the peoples of the Middle East, and, indeed, wherever there is war or the threat of war.

171. This is, indeed, our conviction. This is the hope which we place in you today, Mr. President, and in all our fellow representatives in this august international body, which was, after all, founded to be of service to the whole of humanity.

172. Finally, may I take this opportunity to add on behalf of my Government and people our deep sentiments of condolences to the Government and people of the People's Republic of China on the passing away of their great eternal leader, Chairman Mao.

<sup>6</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, 1951st and 1952nd meetings.*