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

AGENDA ITEM 25

The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives: report of the Secretary-General (continued)

1. Mr. KORHONEN (Finland): The situation in Central America remains critical. Over the last few years the States of the region have reported almost weekly violations of their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Acts of violence, often resulting in the loss of human life and causing damage to economic and other installations, are facts of daily life. The upheaval in the region has also caused a considerable flood of refugees, which further complicates the situation.

2. The numerous problems of the region are interconnected, and their solution requires a comprehensive approach. In the opinion of my Government, the States of the region themselves are in the best position to define their own problems and assess the underlying reasons for them. Also, the solutions to those problems can best be worked out by those States. They should be given the opportunity to do that, free from any outside intervention, exercising their right of self-determination. As a matter of principle, Finland has always supported the peaceful solution of conflicts as an obligation assumed by all Member States under the Charter of the United Nations. In accordance with this principle, the Contadora Group is endeavouring to achieve a comprehensive, peaceful and lasting solution. The Finnish Government supports these endeavours.

3. In September of last year the efforts of the four Latin American countries reached a crucial point. Together with the five Central American countries, they adopted a Document of Objectives,¹ which clearly established the principles to be observed to reduce the conflicts and create peaceful conditions in the region. It also set out a number of political and economic objectives for the Central American States. In recognition of the invaluable contribution made by the Governments of the Contadora Group and as a sign of support for their aim of finding a political solution to the problems affecting the region, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 38/10, endorsing the efforts of the Group.

4. As a result of continued consultations and negotiations, the Contadora Group presented, in September of this year, the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-

operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex]. In that document the Contadora Group, together with the five Central American countries, has tried to formulate the lofty objectives set out in the Document of Objectives in the form of a comprehensive agreement to be signed by the five Central American countries and to be open for signature to all States desiring to contribute to peace and co-operation in Central America.

5. This latest document is a remarkable achievement in itself, and it should give a real chance for peace in that turbulent area. We hope that the five Central American countries will be able, with the help of the Contadora Group, to conclude the negotiation process in the near future and to find a comprehensive solution to their problems. It is up to the General Assembly to appeal to all States to ensure that the objectives worked out by the Contadora Group and the States of the region are respected and that the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity are observed and fully implemented. The Contadora process deserves, once again, the full support of the Organization. Consequently, my delegation supports the draft resolution submitted by the members of the Contadora Group [A/39/L.6].

6. Mrs. CARRASCO MONJE (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Very close to us, and inextricably involved in our feelings, the Central American peoples are the protagonists in a conflict which, if it does not end, threatens to spread, jeopardizing peace and security in the hemisphere. This conflict had its origins in age-old social injustice, but it now contains elements of the international conflict: the arms race and non-compliance with the principles of self-determination and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

7. One year ago, in the debate on the situation in Central America, we recalled the statement made here in 1982 by the constitutional President of Bolivia, Mr. Hernán Siles Zuazo, when he stressed that the peoples of Central America had already suffered too much under totalitarian régimes now to endure the terrible scourge of war.

8. Tension, threats and confrontation have continued to afflict the region during the past two years. This scene of difficulties is in contrast to the hope raised by the efforts made in the past year by the Contadora Group, which have enjoyed the full support and solidarity of the international community, especially the Latin American community.

9. The action taken by the four Contadora countries has shown the ability, imagination and perseverance of the countries of our region in enhancing international law while maintaining the lofty principles of the Charter of the United Nations and that of the Organization of American States [OAS]. It has also

borne witness to the determination of the countries of Central America to seek a peaceful solution, guaranteeing in the future the collective security of all States of the region, through the full application of legal instruments reflecting the interests of all States parties to them.

10. My Government has already affirmed on various occasions its full support for the Contadora process. The international community has noted with interest that the Central American countries have expressed their wish both to sign the revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America and to shoulder the responsibilities stemming from the Contadora process, which must conclude with the signing of the Act.

11. In that spirit, I wish not only to call for a return to respect for the principles of the Charter, but also to appeal to the Central American countries to make a genuine and disinterested effort to proceed as soon as possible to the signature of the Contadora Act, which has been put before them for consideration as a valuable contribution by the Contadora countries. This would facilitate fulfilment of the commitments under that Act and the entry into force of the corresponding implementation and follow-up machinery.

12. We have read with great interest the Secretary-General's report on this question [41/39/562]. We share his hope that the processes of democratization in the region, which include the forthcoming elections in Nicaragua and Guatemala, will provide for the free exercise of citizens' rights and the building or perfecting of pluralist systems which guarantee the active participation of broad majorities.

13. On the other hand, the Secretary-General asks us to think when he reminds us that "the continuation of the upheaval in Central America, with its grievous impact on the civilian population, is still causing a flood of refugees." [*Ibid.*, para. 14.] This tragedy must be ended, and for that purpose tranquility must return to the region and there must be a cessation of threats, hostile actions or attacks against Central American States, Nicaragua in particular.

14. The situation in Central America is a difficult one. Nevertheless, there are some encouraging signs, among them the initiative and disposition to dialogue which began in El Salvador and the constructive spirit in which the five countries of the region are taking part in the Contadora negotiations.

15. In conclusion, I wish to reiterate what has already been stated by the Foreign Minister of my country at the current session of the Assembly: "Bolivia has always expressed its solidarity with the people and Government of Nicaragua in their struggle to move ahead with the country's liberating national transformation" [18th meeting, para. 9].

16. Bolivia has faith that our Central American brothers will find peace and in each of their countries will achieve the prosperity that is so much desired by them and to which they have a right.

17. Mr. MACIEL (Brazil): During the thirty-eighth session last year, when the General Assembly considered for the first time a specific item on Central America, I had the opportunity [47th meeting] to state how closely Brazil was following the changes in the regional scene and to express our deep concern at the growing deterioration of the situation in an area with which my country has many traditional relations and ties. My delegation emphasized then a

number of basic aspects which, in the view of the Brazilian Government, must be fully taken into account if any effort to achieve peace in the region is to succeed. Since it is my Government's belief that the very same aspects still remain essential to any negotiated, just and durable solution for the problems of the region, let me recall them briefly.

18. First, the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations must constitute the main reference, the basic framework, for any settlement of the existing disputes.

19. Secondly, all the extremely complex aspects of the crisis—social, political, economic, military and diplomatic—must be fully considered in the search for a solution. In this process a balance must be established between the lessons and conclusions from a past not yet completely examined or understood and any proposals regarding the future of the countries and peoples of the region.

20. Thirdly, it is of the utmost importance for the entire international community to recognize the essential role of the countries of the region in the quest for peace and stability. The best way for this recognition to be expressed is the scrupulous observance of the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and of self-determination. The problem of Central America must be solved by the countries of the region themselves.

21. A whole year has passed since the initial consideration of the question in the General Assembly. In this period the international community has had a number of reasons to believe that it would be difficult to avoid further deterioration of the situation in Central America. To justify such a dismal assessment it is only necessary to recall, by way of example, the gravity of the events brought before the Security Council for consideration during this year. Those problems only added to the already significant difficulties and strong tensions obstructing the diplomatic efforts of the sister nations of the Contadora Group with a view to a peaceful, negotiated settlement.

22. However, despite all those obstacles the Contadora Group persevered in its negotiations, and it is with renewed hope that my delegation notes the substantial progress in the discussions on many specific details of a comprehensive agreement. My Government is confident that the very same spirit of unity and solidarity that prevailed in those discussions will in the near future allow the Group to overcome reservations.

23. Allow me to state, in conclusion, that a practical way in which the General Assembly could clearly show its support for the various efforts and negotiations regarding the future of Central America, as well as for the principles of the Organization, could be found in renewing this year the spirit of compromise which must prevail for the achievement of a comprehensive solution. My delegation is ready to co-operate towards a positive outcome in that sense.

24. Mr. KARRAN (Guyana): When we look at the course of events in Central America since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 38/10, it becomes clear that in effect that decision has been almost completely ignored; in fact the development of events during the past year has been in a direction entirely contrary to that called for in last year's resolution. The arms buildup in the region has intensified, military manoeuvres have escalated, and

pressures of different kinds against Nicaragua have increased and assumed new dimensions. As a result of the military preparations generally afoot in the area, the fear of an invasion on the part of Nicaragua has mounted. It was during the last year too that we saw the mining of Nicaragua's major ports. Most recently State terrorism even had its first handbook, with Nicaragua again as the object.

25. With regard to El Salvador, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of member States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries noted, in the communiqué issued after their consultative meeting in New York at the beginning of this month, that "the armed internal conflict had aggravated while imperialist intervention had increased. They denounced the attacks which are being carried out against the civilian population living in the insurgent-controlled areas." [See A/39/560, annex, para. 89.]

26. What is happening in Central America today does violence to more than resolution 38/10. It flies in the face of the very Charter of the United Nations and of the several instruments which the Assembly has evolved over the years as part of a system for governing the conduct of inter-State relations. I refer, for example, to the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security [resolution 2734 (XXV)], the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations [resolution 2625 (XXV), annex] and the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States [resolution 36/103, annex]. As always, States cannot ignore them without creating dangerous situations which threaten peace and security, such as the situation which exists in Central America today.

27. In response to the crisis in Central America, the States of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—the Contadora Group—have been engaged in an initiative to defuse that crisis and lay the basis for political solutions to the problems facing the subregion. The efforts of the Contadora Group have long earned broad and enthusiastic support within the international community as a major contribution to peace in the Latin American and Caribbean region through a process which seeks Latin American solutions to the problems of Latin America. Support for the efforts of the Contadora Group was the issue most touched on in the course of the recently concluded general debate.

28. My delegation wishes to hail in this public forum the elaboration of the revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America of 7 September last and would like to reiterate its appreciation to the member States of the Group for their persistent and noble efforts in the cause of peace, especially since those efforts were carried out in the face of external actions which seemed clearly designed to frustrate the negotiating process and lay the groundwork for military intervention.

29. The Contadora Act sets out a comprehensive framework for a peaceful solution to the problems facing Central America and an end to violence and instability in the region. It provides an opportunity for the pursuit of social justice and economic development free from outside interference. Provision is made to guarantee the security, integrity and sovereignty of all the States of the region. It seeks to

promote security and stability within the subregion by a number of measures, including the removal of the emphasis on militarism and the elimination of other destabilizing factors.

30. My delegation considers it particularly significant that at the ministerial meeting at San José on 28 and 29 September the participating ministers expressed their recognition of the Contadora process as representing a "genuinely regional initiative and the best opportunity to achieve a solution to the crisis through political undertaking", and they applauded the draft Contadora Act as "a fundamental stage in the negotiating process for the attainment of peace in the region" [see A/39/539, annex, para. 6].

31. It is also encouraging and of great importance that the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member States of the European Community have unanimously endorsed the Contadora proposals and indicated their willingness to support, if requested, the efforts of those States to which it falls to implement the provisions of any agreement.

32. Guyana also congratulates the Government of Nicaragua on the indication of its decision to subscribe to the Act immediately and without reservations.

33. Guyana considers it essential that the fresh momentum which the elaboration of the Contadora Act represents be maintained. We underscore the call to all concerned made by Ministers for Foreign Affairs of non-aligned States in the final communiqué of their meeting "to continue to make every effort to bring the Contadora process rapidly to final fruition through the signature of this Act which would bring peace to the region" [see A/39/560, annex, para. 84]. Guyana is anxiously awaiting the next forward step in the direction of the completion of the process begun.

34. Guyana will therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/39/L.6, presented by the Contadora States, which urges each one of the five Central American Governments to accelerate its consultations with the Contadora Group in order that the negotiating process may culminate in the prompt signing of the Act.

35. We also draw attention to the position expressed by the Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that all States wishing to contribute to peace and co-operation in Central America, in particular those with links or interests in the region, should indicate their disposition to endorse the Additional Protocol to the Act in order to ensure its full implementation. What is needed now is more than rhetoric of commitment.

36. It has been consistently stressed both in this forum and in the Security Council, within the United Nations as well as outside it, that the roots of Central America's problems lie in the social and economic ills which have plagued that subregion for more than a century. Those problems must be addressed for what they are. Attempts to superimpose on them the dimensions of an East-West ideological conflict only serve further to complicate those problems and to distract attention from their solution. Foreign intervention and interference aggravate them. A commitment to dialogue, ideological pluralism and unhindered economic and social development by each and every State in the subregion is a prerequisite for peace and stability there.

37. The General Assembly has long outlawed military adventurism as an instrument of State behaviour. But we must reiterate once again the cardinal principles of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, respect for the right of States to organize their own internal affairs in accordance with their own needs and interests, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the need to refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations.

38. The Assembly now has an opportunity to make a historic contribution to the cause of peace in Central America. It must seize it. It must lend the full weight of its support to the results of the work of the Contadora Group and call for the early signature of the Act by all concerned. In this way we would be asserting in a practical way the dominion of the rule of law in relations among the States of Central America and rejecting force as a means of settling disputes among those States. It is also expected that the Security Council, as the body with major responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, will play an appropriate role in endorsing and promoting support for the early implementation of the provisions of the Act.

39. We must reject interventionist strategies and discourage the intention of powerful States to wage military and economic aggression against small and weaker States. The Assembly must—it must—express its support for the Government and people of Nicaragua in their effort to protect their independence, their sovereignty and their territorial integrity and to defend themselves against external aggression. In this regard Guyana is pleased to support draft resolution A/39/L.7/Rev.1.

40. The peoples of Central America are demonstrating a determination to co-operate in the achievement of a régime of peace, which furthermore is their right. The elaboration of the Contadora Act confirms this determination. There must be, and there is, an alternative to policies of aggression and subversion in Central America; there must be, and there is, an alternative to military solutions in Central America.

41. In this context my delegation welcomes the response by both the Government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front/Revolutionary Democratic Front [FMLN-FDR] to the call for dialogue made in General Assembly resolution 38/10. We express the hope that the process of dialogue will soon be resumed with a view to achieving a comprehensive negotiated political settlement which, in bringing an end to the armed conflict, would also secure lasting peace based on justice and respect for human rights.

42. So also do we view the conversations between Nicaragua and the United States of America. We hope that these contacts will continue and intensify, always on a basis of genuine mutual respect for independence and sovereignty.

43. My delegation sincerely hopes that the Contadora Act will be implemented with the least delay possible and that all States will co-operate in order to ensure the realization of the longing and the right of the peoples of Central America to live in peace.

44. Mr. SORZANO (United States of America): My delegation has already congratulated you, Sir, but allow me nevertheless to add my own personal congratulations and best wishes upon your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly.

45. It has been a year since this body last dealt with the Central American question. In that relatively short time a large number of developments—some positive, some negative—have taken place in the region that merit our review and analysis. Perhaps there is no better place to start this review than with the Contadora process, given its prominence in public attention, its unquestionable international support and its potential impact on the regional situation.

46. United States support for diplomatic efforts to achieve an effective and lasting peace in Central America has been strong and consistent and continues undiminished. Those efforts pre-date the Contadora process and go back to the very origins of the present crisis, when the United States in 1978 sought actively to help bring the bloodshed in Nicaragua to a halt. They continued when, in October 1982, the United States participated in the elaboration of the San José Accords, whose principles for a peaceful settlement anticipated the content of the Contadora Document of Objectives.¹ And for nearly two years the United States has been represented by a special presidential envoy to promote and support dialogue both among and within nations of the region.

47. Addressing a joint session of the United States Congress in April 1983, President Reagan authoritatively set forth our diplomatic policy towards the region. He identified four objectives. He said that, first, the United States will support any agreement among Central American countries for the withdrawal—under fully verifiable and reciprocal conditions—of foreign military and security advisers and troops; secondly, we want to help opposition groups join the political process in all countries and compete by ballots instead of bullets; thirdly, we will support any verifiable, reciprocal agreements among Central American countries on the renunciation of support for insurgencies on neighbours' territory; and, finally, we desire to help Central America end its costly arms race and will support any verifiable, reciprocal agreements on the non-importation of offensive weapons.

48. As the Contadora process increasingly occupied centre stage of efforts to promote dialogue among nations of the region, the United States repeatedly made its support for that effort clear and unequivocal. Following the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America, issued by the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela on 17 July 1983,² President Reagan wrote these Contadora Presidents to congratulate them on their efforts to promote dialogue in Central America. The President wrote:

"My Government has consistently expressed strong support for the Contadora process. The Cancún Declaration, by articulating the crucial issues which must be treated to reach an effective and enduring resolution of the Central American conflict, is an important contribution to advancing that process."

49. Following agreement by the five Central American nations on 9 September 1983 on the Contadora Document of Objectives, the United States Government took the position that the Document represented a comprehensive statement of the issues which must be addressed and declared it "an excellent basis for continued regional negotiation". We have on

innumerable instances stated our view that the Document of Objectives constitutes a sound outline of an effective agreement and that we support its comprehensive and verifiable implementation.

50. That support has been consistently expressed at each stage of the Contadora process. We welcomed the agreement of 8 January, which created working commissions to develop recommendations for the implementation of the Document of Objectives. On 1 June this year, at the request of the President of Mexico, acting on behalf of the Contadora Group, Secretary of State Shultz initiated a series of high-level bilateral discussions between Nicaragua and the United States, in support of the Contadora process. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Victor Hugo Tinoco and United States Special Envoy Mr. Harry Shlaudeman have now held six rounds of talks in that series and further meetings will be taking place. Mr. Shlaudeman has, additionally, consulted repeatedly with all participants in the Contadora process.

51. When the Contadora participants had under consideration a second draft agreement, the revised Act of 7 September [A/39/562, annex], Secretary of State Shultz again characterized this draft as a positive development in a continuing negotiating process. Comments on the revised draft Act were submitted by the Central American States as requested by the Contadora Group on 15 October. The comments of some of the Central American countries are a matter of public record. They clearly indicate a strongly favourable attitude toward the Act and that the effort to make it an effective and comprehensive implementation of the Contadora Document of Objectives should continue.

52. The preceding remarks should suffice to demonstrate that the United States regards the Contadora process as offering the most appropriate forum and the best hope for achieving a verifiable and comprehensive solution to the problems of the region. It is a regional effort to solve a regional problem, free from outside interference. As that negotiating process now goes forward, our support continues undiminished. The Contadora Group's draft resolution now before us [A/39/L.6] exemplifies such efforts to achieve peace, and the United States is prepared to support it.

53. In affirming our support for the process, and in applauding the efforts of the nine participating countries, we note with approval the express determination of those countries to continue this effort until a document has been achieved which reflects the views and needs of all the countries in the region. Since this final document will have been drafted to accommodate the views and needs of these countries of the region, they will, of course, be the appropriate signatories of the document.

54. The establishment, strengthening and protection of democracy is an explicit and essential component of the Contadora formula for a Central American regional solution. So it is entirely appropriate that the Contadora countries themselves are democracies. One of the principal goals put forward in the Document of Objectives, signed in September 1983 by the Contadora four and all five Central American Governments, is

"To adopt measures conducive to the establishment and, where appropriate, improvement of democratic, representative and pluralistic systems that will guarantee effective popular participation

in the decision-making process and ensure that the various currents of opinion have free access to fair and regular elections based on the full observance of citizens' rights".¹

A related objective, agreed to in the same Document by the nine participants in the Contadora process, is:

"To promote national reconciliation efforts wherever deep divisions have taken place within society, with a view to fostering participation in democratic . . . processes in accordance with the law".¹

55. Against the expectations of sceptics and pessimists and despite the desperate opposition of groups determined to use violence to frustrate the popular will, Central America is undeniably undergoing a profound democratic transformation fully compatible with these Contadora objectives.

56. My delegation is pleased to note the recent dramatic progress in Central America towards empowering the people to choose, establish and develop democratic Governments. In 1982 the military Government of Honduras peacefully relinquished power to permit free and fair elections for a new President and National Assembly, which were duly and constitutionally elected and continue to govern the country democratically despite grave economic problems and the deliberate destabilization attempts from neighbouring Nicaragua. This determination to continue on the path of democracy—rather than Nicaragua's purely verbal and propagandistic expressions of support—is what demonstrates Honduras's acceptance of the Contadora Objectives.

57. The year 1982 also saw the military reform junta in El Salvador, presided over by José Napoleón Duarte, peacefully give up power to permit free and fair elections for a Constituent Assembly that was charged with drafting a new constitution and choosing a provisional President. The winner in the Constituent Assembly elections was not Mr. Duarte's party but a coalition of the opposition, which elected its own leader as Assembly Speaker and also chose the provisional President. Just this year the Salvadorian people again were allowed to vote, this time directly to choose their President. The contest was vigorous; there was robust competition among many parties. No candidate received an absolute majority in the first round of voting, and only after a spirited run-off campaign was a new Salvadorian President, Mr. Duarte, chosen.

58. In the Salvadorian elections, which were observed by representatives of 60 nations and international organizations and 800 journalists, the Salvadorian people took considerable risks for the sake of establishing a democratically elected popular Government. Candidates and voters alike participated in the elections under threats of violence from the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas seeking to dominate El Salvador by military force. To demonstrate the deadly seriousness of their threats, the guerrillas stepped up their campaign of violence against civilians during this electoral campaign. Some Assembly members were murdered by the guerrillas as a "response" to the election process. Roads were mined, buildings were bombed, bridges were dynamited in the effort to impede the elections. Despite these acts of murder and sabotage, 75 per cent of the eligible voters voted. Under these circumstances there can be no question as to who supported Contadora's objectives and who did not.

59. The same is true with respect to the courageous offer of President Duarte to go unarmed to meet and seek conciliation with the commanders of the insurgents in his country. With the whole world watching, the meeting took place peacefully in a church at La Palma with the mediation of the Archbishop of San Salvador, Monsignor Rivera y Damas. President Duarte's objective in the meeting was precisely what I have cited from the Contadora Document of Objectives, namely, "To promote national reconciliation efforts" where "deep divisions have taken place within society, with a view to fostering participation in democratic . . . processes in accordance with the law".

60. Guatemala also has taken significant steps towards establishing a constitutional, popular and democratic Government. Just a few months ago the people of Guatemala peacefully, freely and fairly elected a Constituent Assembly that promises to prepare the way for presidential elections next year. That too is progress towards the Contadora objectives.

61. Finally, in 1982 the people of Costa Rica continued their proud and admirable tradition of nearly four decades of uninterrupted rule by popularly elected Governments by electing a new President. And in this most recent election—as in every election but one since the 1940s, the President elected was of the opposite party from that of the President he replaced. Needless to say, no better example of the democratic spirit embodied in the Contadora objectives can be found.

62. The record is clear that three of the five Central American nations now have democratically chosen civilian Governments and that one other has taken concrete steps towards establishing democratic civilian rule, while promising unambiguously to follow through to the completion of that process next year. The recent elections in these four republics met the key criteria for authentically democratic elections: they permitted open competition under conditions of free speech, press and assembly; they were inclusive—large, nearly universal portions of the adult populations of these countries were eligible to participate, and their results were definitive—that is, the outcome of the votes largely determined the partisan composition of the Governments.

63. In contrast to the other Central American nations, Nicaragua is openly defying both Contadora and the movement towards democratic, civilian and constitutional government evident throughout the region. As an outward symbol of its contempt for civilian government, the Sandinist leaders not only prefer to be addressed by the military title of *comandante* but even appear before this General Assembly in full military regalia.

64. We must confess we were not surprised. For a number of years my delegation has been pointing to the accumulating evidence indicating the real nature of the Sandinist regime. Indeed, the unelected military rulers of Nicaragua have a long-standing record of ideological contempt for free, fair, inclusive and competitive democratic elections in their own country and in those of their neighbours. Although one month before they achieved power in 1979 the Sandinist leaders solemnly promised the OAS that they would hold free elections after assuming power, they quickly reneged on that promise and have never

shown the slightest genuine inclination to implement it.

65. Early in 1980 the Sandinists consolidated their control over the Council of State, enlarging it and packing it with their own supporters to ensure a permanent majority. In July 1980 Sandinist Defence Minister Humberto Ortega announced that there would be no need for elections, since the people had already "voted" during the revolution. "Elections", he ominously declared, "could not be held until the people had been re-educated."

66. The following month, in August 1980, Humberto Ortega announced that elections would be put off until 1985. Even then, it was said, these would not be bourgeois elections—which I take to mean the kind of authentically democratic elections called for in the Contadora Document of Objectives and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—but they would be "people's" elections. Power "will not be raffled off", insisted the Sandinist Interior Minister Tomás Borge.

67. On 25 August 1981 Humberto Ortega remarked, in a speech to the military: "We have not promised the elections that they"—and I must interpolate here "the bourgeoisie"—"think we are going to promote, and we are never going to discuss power, as we have already said on other occasions, because this power was taken by the people through arms, and here the power of the people will never be questioned."

68. Three years later, after enormous international pressure, national elections were scheduled for this coming 4 November in Nicaragua. But how do the military rulers of Nicaragua conceive of these elections? Here is what a member of the military junta, Bayardo Arce, said in May 1984—I must say in here that this is on tape and there is no question about the authenticity of what I am about to read out to you now:

"What a revolution needs is the power to enforce. This power to enforce is precisely what constitutes the defence of the dictatorship of the proletariat—the ability of the class to impose its will using the instruments at hand, without going into formal or bourgeois details. From that point of view, the elections are bothersome to us."

At the same time, Comandante Arce predicted that, following the certain Sandinist victory in the November elections, the Sandinists would remove "the façade of political pluralism" and establish "the party of the revolutionary single party".

69. In view of all these anti-democratic statements emanating from several of the *comandantes*, no one should be surprised when the 4 November elections in Nicaragua turn out to be a farce incapable of deceiving even those few who still harbour hopes that the *comandantes* will turn out to be genuine democrats after all.

70. How can these elections be deemed democratic? Who can claim that they comply with Contadora? To put it simply, the conditions for free and fair elections in Nicaragua do not exist. All the news media are controlled by the Sandinists, with the exception of the newspaper *La Prensa*, which is routinely censored, and the radio of the Catholic Church, which is forbidden to broadcast political material. There is evidence that the Draconian military draft is being used as a means of intimidating supporters of the political opposition. The electo-

ral council created to administer the elections is completely dominated by members of the Sandinist Party. Vigilante mobs—the infamous *turbas*—have been encouraged to intimidate the opposition, and they do. And the most representative elements of democratic opposition simply are not allowed to participate in the elections.

71. The principal opposition alliance, the *Coordinadora Democrática*, had asked to have its candidates placed on the ballot, but only if certain essential conditions were met. These included commonplace conditions for democratic contests, such as an end to press censorship, suspension of martial law, separation of the State from the Sandinist Party and an amnesty law to allow all Nicaraguan citizens to participate in the electoral process—not extremist demands, I would say. The conditions nevertheless were refused, and the *Coordinadora*, not wishing to be a party to a farcical election, refrained from registering for places on the ballot.

72. Other aspects of the situation in Nicaragua are gravely at odds with the Contadora objectives of regional peace, social well-being and internal democracy. One of these is intense religious intolerance. The Roman Catholic Church, of which a majority of Nicaraguans and other Central Americans are members, is suffering persecution. Faithful clergymen are being intimidated by the violence of the *turbas divinas*. Even Pope John Paul II was rudely mocked by Sandinist operatives when he visited Nicaragua last year. When the military régime summarily expelled 10 Catholic missionary priests from the country in July of this year, the Archbishop of Managua, Monsignor Obando y Bravo, remarked, "We want to state clearly that this Government is totalitarian . . . We are dealing with a Government that is an enemy of the Church." The Archbishop of San José, Monsignor Román Arrieta, received the expelled priests into his country in a ceremony and declared, "There were still in the world men and women of good will who did not believe a totalitarian régime had enthroned itself in Nicaragua. Now those people know the truth."

73. The Nicaraguan delegation is fond of quoting *The New York Times* in its statements. It is my turn. Let me also quote from *The Times*. Just today it carried a front-page report quoting Nicaraguan Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega's statement that

"It is said and repeated"—it has been said and repeated here—"that all these calamities and wars are caused only by 'foreign aggression' of an imperialism that is the enemy of humanity.

"The people, for their part, ask: To what imperialism belong those who impose a régime that plunders, jails and issues constant calls to arms? Who has decided this? Who has made the choice to move from one system to another . . . ?

"Why do they wish to impose, by force and deceit, ideologies which, good as they may be, are not accepted by the people? Why are we offered only new oppressions and more serious confrontations? Is this not the basic cause of our growing internal weakness?"

Anyone that has followed Nicaraguan developments in the last few years will have no difficulty in answering those questions. Certainly, the Nicaraguan people have no doubts about how to answer them.

74. Minority religious communities in Nicaragua have also suffered under the Sandinists. Virtually the entire Jewish community of Nicaragua has fled the country since the Sandinists took over. Moravians and evangelical Protestants, who make up a large proportion of the Miskito Indian population, are also being persecuted.

75. My delegation has addressed the Assembly before on the matter of the gross violations of human rights committed by the Sandinists against the Miskito, Sumu and Rama tribes of the indigenous peoples of Nicaragua's Atlantic coast. These Sandinist practices, including forced relocation into concentration camps, destruction of villages, homes and livestock and violence against civilians, have elicited the grave concern of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

76. The militarization of Nicaragua under the Sandinists is a concrete threat to the peace of the entire region. Since 1979 Nicaraguan-trained military forces have increased from 10,000 to over 100,000. This is an extraordinary level of militarization for a country with a population of only 2.8 million people. Sandinist armed forces outnumber the combined armed forces of all the other Central American countries.

77. Despite the Sandinists' clear anti-democratic intentions, their violations of human rights, their denial of social and political pluralism, their continuing subversion of neighbouring countries, their frenetic arms buildup and their harbouring of thousands of foreign troops and advisers, the Sandinist régime shamelessly declares its support for Contadora and cynically proclaims its intention to sign the Contadora Act as it now stands. Of course it will. But, then, it will sign anything and promise anything that will perpetuate its power and privilege.

78. This expediency in the pursuit of power, this reliance on military means to dominate a resisting populace, this ostentatious fascination with military titles, symbols and uniforms sadly reminds us of the era of military dictatorship the world had hoped Nicaragua had already transcended. Regrettably, this is not the case, and that is why in recent weeks crowds of Nicaraguans that have perceived the real nature of the Sandinists have been heard in the city of Corinto chanting the slogan "*El Frente y Somoza son la misma cosa*", which, roughly translated, means "The Sandinists and Somoza are the same thing."

79. The people are seldom deceived, and the Nicaraguans are no exception. They see their Sandinist rulers living in luxury in former Somoza mansions, enjoying privileges denied their fellow citizens and partaking of sumptuous meals when mothers see their children grow hungry for lack of milk. So it is not surprising that, remembering the inequalities of the Somoza régime, the Nicaraguans today shout that "*El Frente y Somoza son la misma cosa*".

80. The people remember. Somoza repressed political freedoms, censored *La Prensa*, gaoled, tortured and murdered his political opponents and generally intimidated the population into political acquiescence. But the Sandinists today are doing exactly the same thing, and, naturally, the Nicaraguan people have concluded that "*El Frente y Somoza son la misma cosa*".

81. Let the Sandinists, too, remember. Let them remember the fate of the Somoza régime, because if the long-suffering Nicaraguan people are equating the

Sandinist Front with the Somoza régime, they are likely to take the same measures with the *Frente* that they previously took with Somoza.

82. Mr. ROSALES-RIVERA (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): When we analyse events in Central America since last year's General Assembly debate, we find positive facts and a number of negative factors. The positive part consists above all in progress towards democracy or its consolidation in almost all the countries of Central America. This has been the case in El Salvador, which, after two rounds of voting unprecedented in the number of citizens taking part, elected to the presidency Mr. José Napoleón Duarte of the Christian Democratic Party. This election was absolutely free and was monitored by hundreds of impartial observers from foreign Governments and international political organizations and journalists from many parts of the world. It was open on a basis of equality to all ideological schools of thought that wished to take part and was a real civil electoral contest, won by the candidate receiving the necessary majority of the votes, who was thus authorized by the people to govern for five years. Since the beginning of its term, President Duarte's Government has worked hard to guarantee civil liberties, maintain public order, guarantee respect for the law and vigorously promote human rights in an atmosphere of democracy and social justice.

83. Moreover, in Guatemala, a neighbouring brother country, free elections were held for the members of the National Constituent Assembly, and its Government has a timetable for the consolidation of national institutions, thus beginning a promising process towards greater democracy.

84. Honduras and Costa Rica have maintained their democratic structures. Costa Rica enjoys a very solid tradition in this respect. Honduras is governed by a freely elected civilian Government after many years of military régimes and has thus been able to preserve its constitutional and democratic systems.

85. El Salvador considers that the effort towards greater democracy should take place throughout Central America if we wish to enjoy a climate of peace and harmony in the area.

86. Democracy is not therefore a mere political style; it is the essential condition of the existence in the region of relations between States based on principles and norms of international law. In Central America the policy whereby one State embraces totalitarian ideologies to put into practice so-called international solidarity and gives not only moral, political and diplomatic but also material support and even supplies military hardware to movements bringing together groups of extremist armed rebels inside other countries is totally out of place. Such groups, despite being small and unpopular, damage the national economy, disrupt public order and lower the standards of programmes of health, employment, education, housing and general welfare. The opening up towards democracy and pluralism in Central America means precisely that in no State should a system be imposed, even from within, that is exclusive and excludes other ideologies. Even less is it admissible to follow a policy of exporting such a dictatorial model.

87. The monopoly of one ideological doctrine imposed from above is not democracy, nor are elections in which power is not challenged. Any election is a

contest for power and must be open to all sectors of opinion on a basis of equality. Central America has witnessed so many electoral farces that the people are wise enough to distinguish the real from the fictitious and contrived. When broad-based political parties do not take part in electoral contests and others withdraw because they are not provided with the minimum guarantee of equality and justice *vis-à-vis* the State, this is an unmistakable symptom of the fact that we are witnessing a governmental imposition; consequently, this is a propaganda manoeuvre and not a real consultation of the people's will.

88. Each country in Central America must constitute a focal point of democracy so that it spreads to other countries and makes them stronger. Central America must be democratic as a whole and in its constituent parts. Democratization in Central America is not a luxury; it is an urgent need in the present circumstances. Democracy in turn will enable the Central American countries to emerge from the East-West confrontation. Their peoples do not wish to be participants in that confrontation, much less pawns. The East-West confrontation in its present form is made more acute in Central America whenever weapons are supplied to extremist groups in El Salvador by Governments of Marxist persuasion. And this process is continuing. There is intermittent arms trafficking from Nicaragua, as the last link in the chain of weapons shipment.

89. What I have said does not mean that I am unaware that in my country in the past there existed economic and social conditions that served as a breeding ground for attitudes of rebellion, particularly when the institutional vehicles for political expression were closed off. We admit that besides social injustice there was a lack of political freedom. But that, fortunately, is now past history. Today we are breathing the air of democracy.

90. Experience has shown that an undemocratic Government is more inclined not only to accept but to institutionalize actions that are aggressive and violate the principles of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. They proceed from the idea that their security is strengthened when similar régimes exist—that is, undemocratic ones—on their frontiers or near by. In this way they try all the harder to establish other totalitarian Governments in the area. Nevertheless, they forget the basic factor in this pattern, which is the decisive determination of the people to reject dictatorships and totalitarianism. When people are given freedom of choice they always choose the path of democracy.

91. We are convinced that the political problems of Central America became more acute when the strategy of exporting revolution was devised and carried out. Conduct of that kind is a basic cause of the critical situation in the region. The scheme of exporting revolution has helped exacerbate conflicts that would never have assumed their present dimensions if the theory of exporting revolution through violent means had not been put into practice. Once the problems worsen, solutions become more difficult, and those who poured petrol on the first flickers of conflict are the very ones that are engulfed in this increase in tension. The sad thing is that in this process of the complication of political problems human lives are lost and national wealth is destroyed; the arms race speeds up; relations of friendship are replaced by coldness and tension and suspicion

thrives in the area. Finally, the spectres of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse arise.

92. Fortunately, there is a peace initiative which seeks to solve Central American problems comprehensively and simultaneously: the Contadora initiative. Its principles and purposes were clearly defined in the Document of Objectives¹ and were accepted by the five Governments. There is also another document which gives articulate expression to the commitments contained in the Document of Objectives; I refer to the revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex].

93. As expected, several Governments of the region commented on this document before the 15 October deadline set for such comments. These comments were considered by the Governments concerned to be relevant and necessary and were made on the basis of their own perceptions and needs. El Salvador, which has been and continues to be the victim of acts of destabilization from outside and from within the region, is very concerned that the substantive commitments undertaken should faithfully reflect mutual concessions properly and thoroughly carried out. We have every reason to be distrustful. If some deny what is well known to all—that weapons are being transferred from Nicaragua to El Salvador to supply the guerrillas, besides other actions promoting the destabilization of the Government, such as training camps, logistical co-ordination of military matériel, provision of sanctuary, and so forth—why should we not be mistrustful of commitments signed but guaranteed almost solely by words?

94. El Salvador has no path to follow in negotiations other than that of demanding the establishment of a competent, strong and flexible verification and monitoring machinery, truly commensurate with its task. What will ensure the security of the terms of a Central American agreement is the existence of a true verification and control mechanism, in both the political and security spheres.

95. No country is going to be so irresponsible as to sign something not in keeping with its national interests. That is not a matter of taste, but of necessity. Every Government in the area must be certain that it has achieved at least the minimum to meet its national interests and its concerns. The appropriate substantive norms must have as a corollary procedural and organizational machinery which will fully guarantee the fulfilment of agreed substantive commitments. Without such suitable machinery, promises about future conduct will remain airy, fragile and weak. Doubts will hang like a shadow over the document and could lead to accusations of bad faith in the fulfilment of the commitments.

96. It is, therefore, in the interest of all parties to the treaty that a set of norms should be devised to ensure the fullest compliance with commitments entered into. If an international agreement is to be carried out in good faith, why should a State refuse to permit its contractual obligations to be surrounded with the necessary guarantees of proper fulfilment? Sound logic tells us that no one intending to honour his commitments can object to the establishment of machinery and rapid, effective sanctions for confirming or rejecting complaints of a violation.

97. In the present circumstances, moreover, a strong and flexible verification and control mechanism is the best way to dispel suspicion and constitutes the corner-stone of what have come to be called

confidence-building measures. Other measures planned revolve around this central element, which is what would stabilize the agreement. Therefore, a true verification and control mechanism has come to be synonymous with good faith in the negotiation of agreements.

98. The meeting of Foreign Ministers just held at Tegucigalpa, on 19 and 20 October—which was not attended by the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, despite his having been invited in good time—was planned so that the countries directly concerned—the five Central American countries—would be able to exchange views on the regional situation and reconcile divergent positions which still exist regarding the revised version of the Contadora Act. El Salvador considers that direct dialogue among these five countries at the present stage is an excellent way of advancing the negotiating process. Thus, in the joint communiqué issued at that ministerial meeting [A/39/599, annex I], the Governments which attended the meeting stated that:

“The participants held a broad discussion on the situation in the region, activated by the sincere desire for peace of their peoples and Governments, who wish to promote the process of negotiation sponsored by the Contadora Group.

“They observed that their meeting demonstrated the favourable attitude of their Governments towards the continuation of the process of political consultation which will ensure the necessary effective co-ordination, with a view to giving legal force to the commitments formulated during that process and therefore adopting whatever realistic and equitable formulas for conciliation may be deemed appropriate, so as to facilitate the signing of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, in accordance with the decisions taken at the seventh joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Central American countries and of the Contadora Group, held in Panama City on 7 September 1984.

“With that objective, they expressed their views on the revised version of the Contadora Act and after careful analysis noted with satisfaction that those views were aimed at giving effect to the commitments assumed, and perfecting the mechanisms for execution, verification and control with regard to political and security matters, thereby guaranteeing that the Act will be genuinely operative and consistent with the constitutional provisions of the parties.

“They also agreed on the need to establish in the Act an appropriate equilibrium between the prestations and counter-prestations of the Central American States, so that the instrument will effectively ensure the performance of reciprocal and simultaneous obligations.

“They reiterated that at the current stage it is fundamentally important that the Central American countries should participate directly in the negotiation and drafting of the text of the Act. To that end, they recognized the desirability of promoting, prior to the eighth joint meeting, a period of intensive consultation among themselves and with the members of the Contadora Group, so that the five Central American States can harmonize their points of view so as to ensure that the Act is accepted by all parties.

"As a consequence of the foregoing, they harmonized in a single text the observations made. That text will be brought to the attention of the Governments of the countries of the Contadora Group and the Government of Nicaragua, as a contribution by their countries to the achievement of a broad consensus that will lead to the signing of the Act. In that connection, they expressed their desire to see the text of the Act, with the observations incorporated, prior to the eighth joint meeting.

"They welcomed the Joint Communiqué of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group issued in Madrid on 17 October, which states that the observations made will undoubtedly be very useful, and that it will be advisable to incorporate them, since they help to make the text more precise without altering the equilibrium achieved in that document.

"They expressed regret that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua had not attended the Tegucigalpa meeting, and in that regard reiterated their belief that only national and regional dialogue, aimed at pacification, democratization and reconciliation, will help to resolve the crisis in the area.

"They expressed the hope that the distinguished Government of Nicaragua will join in the common effort to smooth the path for the establishment of conditions of security and coexistence governed by mutual respect, which are essential for guaranteeing the political stability and economic and social development so desired by the peoples of the area."

99. The foregoing is consonant with the communiqué of the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group issued in Madrid on 17 October [A/39/604, annex], the relevant part of which states:

"The five Governments of the region put forward their positions prior to 15 October, the deadline established for that purpose at the most recent Joint Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs. The comments made will undoubtedly be very useful in concluding the current stage of the process, through the finalization of the legal instrument proposed. All the above took place in accordance with the objective defined at the Joint Meeting of 7 September 1984 in Panama.

"On the basis of the above-mentioned factors, the Ministers agreed that it was appropriate to incorporate the comments made by the Central American countries in order to lend greater precision to the statements without modifying the balance achieved in the document."

100. There can be no doubt that a great deal of progress has been made in the Contadora process. We have worked tirelessly, animated by the best of good will, with the spirit of understanding for which we are known, in the quest for a genuine solution for the common benefit of the Central American nation. Our Salvadorian identity joins with our Central American background which impels us towards the historic vision of a Central America ennobled by its values of freedom and democracy. We shall collaborate by offering our best thinking on the subject in order to ensure the signing of the agreement, moving towards the creation of the atmosphere of concord and peace to which our peoples are entitled. Of course, the commendable work carried out by the

Contadora Group continues to be a task requiring tact, persuasion and patience. It is a process which must move without haste but without interruptions. Regarding the Contadora efforts, El Salvador from this rostrum renews its unswerving Central American dedication and its inexhaustible determination to fight for a comprehensive and honourable solution, the sole beneficiaries of which will be our peoples. We firmly believe that the progress made in this phase has created the political space, as it were, for accommodation. We understand that there are no such things as immediate solutions and that perseverance is a virtue that will lead us to a general agreement that is the result of the efforts of all and firstly of those of us who have in our own flesh suffered the effects of this situation of conflict and confrontation.

101. The General Assembly has noted with admiration and surprise the generous peace offer made on the eighth of this month, in the statement by President Duarte [24th meeting], to hold a meeting with the Salvadorian guerrilla leaders on the fifteenth of this month at 10 a.m. in the town of La Palma in my country. That peace proposal by President Duarte received the support and congratulations of the international community. The meeting was held on the date and at the place scheduled and was witnessed by members of the hierarchy of the Salvadorian Catholic Church, who accepted the invitation extended by President Duarte. In that way the dialogue took place on Salvadorian territory, among Salvadorians, in order to deal with problems of direct interest to Salvadorians.

102. I have already pointed out that it was not the intention to invite foreign Governments to meddle in affairs which are within the domestic jurisdiction of El Salvador. Those meetings led precisely to lowering the tone of the East-West confrontation, and I mentioned it merely to reiterate our firm determination to struggle for peace.

103. In that regard, we do not accept the ideas utilized by the first delegation speaking in this debate. Because of the position its Government takes, with our consent, in delicate diplomacy it should be particularly careful. However, that delegation not only referred to a sentence in a communiqué that had already been criticized by El Salvador and is in fact now out of date, but also suggested that the reason for President Duarte's offer was that he was responding to international pressure. They thus showed their lack of diplomatic judgement.

104. We have the firm conviction, and the right to demand, that we Salvadorians should be allowed to settle our own problems ourselves. Of course, the political space created to make a peace settlement possible will be within the constitutional framework, and it has no other objective than to achieve peace through peace itself. It is a peace that our peoples deserve. This desire for peace needs no arguments. It is a struggle to realize the highest expression of the feeling of a people which has gone to the polls repeatedly for such a praiseworthy objective.

105. The path to such a political solution is open, and we shall follow it with dignity and decorum, without passion or a desire for revenge but without abandonment of principle. Power can be achieved in a democracy only through the polls, and El Salvador has now joined the company of democratic nations.

106. Mr. KURODA (Japan): Japan believes that peace and stability in Central America is a matter of great importance with implications for the countries far beyond the region. Events in Central America can have serious ramifications for Latin America as a whole and, indeed, can affect the peace and stability of the entire world.

107. The situation in Central America continues to be volatile. It is of utmost importance that a worsening of the situation be prevented and that ways and means be sought to improve the present state of affairs. This will require efforts by the countries of Central America themselves, as well as by their neighbouring countries. Japan shares the view that economic development based on freedom and democracy and the attainment of social justice are essential to a fundamental solution to the instability of the region. From this point of view, Japan appreciates and has consistently supported the peace process being pursued by the Contadora Group. We are encouraged by the recent Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, which is based on the Document of Objectives¹ approved by nine Latin American countries, including the five countries of Central America. We believe this Act can lead to a major development in the promotion of peace and security in the region. I wish to pay high tribute to the Contadora Group for the efforts and valuable contributions it has been making over the past two years.

108. Japan sincerely hopes that the countries concerned will quickly enter into fruitful negotiations on the remaining issues in order to assure that the Act will contribute in a real way to peace and security in Central America. It is incumbent upon the international community, for its part, to support those regional efforts and to create an environment that will be conducive to their success.

109. Japan believes, furthermore, that it is necessary to achieve domestic political stability, based on reconciliation and harmony among the people of a country, and that this, in turn, will promote regional peace and stability. The democratic process and dialogue among the people, as envisaged in the Act, are essential elements toward this end.

110. My Government was gratified that democratic elections were held in El Salvador this year, and that on 15 October talks were held between President José Napoleón Duarte and other government officials, on the one hand, and leaders of the opposition forces, on the other. Japan regards this meeting as a truly epoch-making event, giving us cause to hope for progress in achieving peace and security in the region, and welcomes the agreement by both sides to continue the dialogue. It is our hope that the dialogue will lead to the establishment of harmony, peace and stability in El Salvador. At the same time, Japan strongly hopes that such efforts towards domestic harmony in El Salvador will generate momentum in promoting democratization and harmony in other Central American countries, thus bringing peace and stability to the entire region.

111. It is widely recognized that peace and security in Central America depend on the economic prosperity of the region. Japan has been endeavouring to expand the assistance and co-operation it extends to the countries there. I wish to take this opportunity to assure you that Japan will continue, to the best of its ability, to extend co-operation in the fields of eco-

nomic development and social welfare, within the existing framework of its economic co-operation efforts.

112. Mr. ACEMAH (Uganda): The attention of the international community has been appropriately focused on the alarming situation in the Central American region. Over the past year we have witnessed with increased apprehension the growing tension in the area. The situation has been characterized by accusations and counter-accusations, acts of subversion, destabilization and provocation, and cross-border military attacks resulting in loss of lives and damage to the economic infrastructure of certain countries. At one stage the situation deteriorated to such a level that ports were mined and blockaded. The sovereignty and independence of countries in the area are being violated or compromised.

113. If appropriate action is not taken, there is a serious danger that the area could soon be engulfed in a regional war. Thus, the events in the area constitute a danger to international peace and security. The challenge to the international community is to assist the countries in the region and those involved in the conflict to move away from the path of confrontation and resolve their differences through negotiations.

114. Uganda's position regarding this crisis in Central America is clear and well known. Uganda has always maintained that the countries of the region themselves should be encouraged to reach a peaceful settlement of their disputes through dialogue.

115. In the construction of peace for the region it is imperative that certain principles be observed. These include the obligation of all States, both within and outside the region, to respect the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially non-interference in the internal affairs of States, self-determination for all peoples and respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of all States. We wish to reiterate the view that each country in the region has the right to decide for itself the system or mode of development it should pursue. We reject any attempt by anyone to impose a particular economic, social or political system on any country in Central America.

116. In our view the problems of Central America arise, to a large measure, from decades of political and social imbalance. The countries of the region should therefore be helped to redress the basic social problems through a process of fundamental transformation. It is in this respect that we welcome the ministerial meeting held at San José on 28 and 29 September between the countries of the European Community, Portugal, Spain, the Contadora Group and the Central American countries, at which increased economic aid was pledged to assist the region.

117. We applaud the Contadora Group for their efforts to defuse the tension and bring about a negotiated solution. Their initiative represents an admirable attempt at finding regional and negotiated solutions among the countries of Central America. My delegation was encouraged last year when the countries of the region ratified a Document of Objectives¹ negotiated by the Contadora Group, which laid a firm foundation for serious negotiations.

118. It was our hope that the adoption last year of General Assembly resolution 38/10 by consensus would bolster the Contadora efforts. Our hopes were further raised a month ago when agreement was

reached on the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. It is a matter of deep regret to us that new problems have thus far prevented the signing of the final Act. We welcome the positive response of Nicaragua regarding the final Act for peace and call upon other parties to respond positively as well, both in words and in deeds.

119. The successful conclusion by the Contadora Group of an agreement on the final Act and the recent meeting between the President of El Salvador and the leaders of the FMLN are clear proof of the determination of the people and countries of Central America to resolve their differences through peaceful means. Uganda welcomes this positive development and would like to express the hope that this spirit of accommodation and reconciliation will receive the total and unconditional support of all States Members of this Organization.

120. In closing, I should like to renew, on behalf of the Government and people of Uganda, the expression of our solidarity with the peoples of Central America in their just struggle for freedom, social justice and lasting peace. I reaffirm Uganda's full support for the commendable efforts of the Contadora Group and wish the Group every success in the realization of its noble objectives.

121. Mr. KNIPPING VICTORIA (Dominican Republic) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of the Dominican Republic wishes once again to set forth its clear position on the situation in Central America.

122. In the General Assembly, in other bodies of the United Nations and in other forums and international organizations, the Dominican Republic has invariably and unequivocally maintained that a solution to the crisis can be viable and lasting only if it is the result of dialogue, negotiation and the political will for understanding among the parties directly concerned. Hence, a climate conducive to reconciliation between the parties to the conflict had to be provided so that, through dialogue and negotiation, the social and economic causes of the political instability of the region could be thoroughly examined.

123. The efforts tirelessly exerted by the Contadora Group in the quest for peace did create the conditions necessary for discussion among the Central American States of the way to solve, by peaceful means, the problems that they face.

124. From the very outset, the peace efforts of the Contadora Group had the resolute backing and moral support of the Government of the Dominican Republic. It could not have been otherwise because, apart from the fact that we feel the suffering of our Central American brothers as if it were our own and are in complete solidarity with them, the peaceful settlement of conflicts and international disputes is an essential part of the foreign policy of the Government that is now responsible for the fate of the Dominican people, which regards peace as the highest of social values because without it social and economic progress, coexistence and harmonious and civilized relations between peoples are impossible.

125. We wish to emphasize that the Dominican Republic's interest in a peaceful, negotiated solution to the Central American crisis is so great that the first expression of the foreign policy of the Government of President Salvador Jorge Blanco, the "Santo Domingo Declaration"—signed by officials, including heads

of Government, of Belize, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic on the occasion of his inauguration as President of the country on 16 August 1982—emphatically rejects any solution to the situation in Central America by the use of violence and states that "negotiation and dialogue are essential for a political solution to the crisis, a solution that should be the exclusive result of common efforts and determination, with the aim of promoting and implementing democracy, economic development and, above all, social justice".

126. The peace process initiated by Contadora, which deserved and continues to deserve the fullest support of the international community, has reached a crucial phase with the adoption of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, an instrument that in our view establishes appropriate bases for the achievement of détente and peace and the promotion of economic and social development in the region.

127. During the just-concluded general debate, the Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic, José Augusto Vega Imbert, referring specifically to the Contadora Act, stated:

"It is clear that, while the actions of the Contadora Group have received the encouragement and backing of the United Nations and the international community, this final stage of overriding importance requires the full, active and complementary support of the countries of the Latin American region in particular and of the international community as a whole. We wish to record our gratitude and express our encouragement to the Central American countries which have already stated their willingness to sign this important document." [See 17th meeting, para. 273.]

128. In view of the crucial nature of this phase of the negotiating process, we sincerely urge the Central American Governments to redouble their consultations with the Contadora Group in order to accelerate the signing of the Act; we also urge all States, particularly those with ties to and interests in the region, to respect fully the purposes and principles of the Act as well as the commitments undertaken by virtue of adherence to its Additional Protocol.

129. The Dominican delegation fully and unconditionally supports the draft resolution submitted by the Contadora countries [A/39/L.6].

130. In conclusion, we wish to say publicly that the Government of the Dominican Republic is deeply grateful for the work done by the member countries of the Contadora Group—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—in the quest for peace and harmony in the Central American region.

131. Mr. VONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The situation in Central America, which has continued to deteriorate for a year now—indeed, ever since it appeared on the Assembly's agenda at its thirty-eighth session—is of increasing concern to the international community for, if it continues, it may threaten international peace and security. The Ministers and heads of delegation of the countries members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries who met here earlier this month also shared this concern.

132. Many factors have played a part in aggravating the situation.

133. In the first instance, there is the intensification of the undeclared war being waged by the Pentagon

and the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA]—in other words, by the present United States Administration—against Nicaragua. In waging that war, the CIA has equipped, financed and maintained an army of from 12,000 to 15,000 Somoquist mercenaries based in neighbouring countries to the north and south of Nicaragua, from where those mercenaries continuously launch attacks against civilian and economic targets inside Nicaragua—co-operatives, schools, hospitals, bridges, fuel depots, electrical plants, oil pipe-lines, cities, airports and seaports. The resulting damage has been assessed at more than \$200 million and more than 3,000 citizens have been killed or wounded.

134. This litany of reprehensible acts of aggression includes, of course, the mining of the ports of Corinto, Puerto Sandino and El Bluff in March 1984. Five foreign merchant vessels were damaged by the explosion of those mines.

135. The cruelty and barbarity of that act, which must be termed one of international terrorism, aroused the deepest indignation of the international community. It violated the fundamental principles and norms of international law, in particular that of freedom of maritime navigation. The fact that the International Court of Justice, on 10 May 1984, called for provisional measures against the United States because of that action fully reflects the general feeling.

136. Along with the hostile activities of its mercenaries, the Pentagon, with its faithful allies in the area, organized several joint large-scale and prolonged land, air and naval military manoeuvres in the vicinity of Nicaragua. Those manoeuvres, known by the code names "Big Pine One", "Big Pine Two", "Granadero I", "Ocean Venture 84", "Guardians of the Gulf" and "Operation Lempira", in which some 30,000 men and 43 warships participated, were designed to threaten and intimidate Nicaragua.

137. In addition, they were aimed at deterring the Sandinist forces from exercising their right to pursue mercenary units based in Honduras or seeking refuge there. Even more serious is the fact that, according to a communiqué from the Council for Western Hemisphere Affairs, the State Department and the Pentagon have drawn up a plan with the code name "Pegasus", which entails a series of attacks against Nicaragua from Honduras designed to provoke retaliatory strikes that would then be qualified by the leadership of the Central American Defence Council as evidence of a "threat of war" by Managua against all of Central America. Direct American intervention against Nicaragua is to follow in order to "pacify" it, along the lines of what occurred in Grenada.

138. In order to justify its aggression and intervention against Nicaragua to American and world public opinion, the Reagan Administration slanderously accuses that country of being a threat to the security of other Central American countries by "exporting" its revolution.

139. However, since the victory of the Sandinist revolution, the Nicaraguan Government of National Reconstruction has continuously proclaimed its foreign policy of peace and non-alignment, and, on the domestic level, notwithstanding the many and varied problems left by the Somoquist régime, it has expended enormous efforts in the economic and social fields with a view to improving the well-being of its people. There was thus a remarkable growth in the produc-

tion of foodstuffs and agricultural products up until 1983 as a result of agrarian reform. Decent dwellings were provided to working people, whereas 270,000 families had languished in hovels on the eve of the revolution. From March to August 1980 the literacy campaign reduced the rate of illiteracy from 50 to 12.9 per cent, thus making Nicaragua one of the most advanced countries of Central America in terms of the number of people able to read and write. The public-health system was enlarged and now covers 80 per cent of the territory and ensures free health care to the majority of workers; social security is also being broadened and homes for the aged and nursery schools have been established in rural areas for the first time in the country's history. It is precisely those achievements that the CIA and its mercenaries are trying to destroy.

140. Can we then say that Nicaragua is threatening the peace in Central America? Not at all. That alleged "Nicaraguan threat", or even "Cuban", exists solely in the minds of the current leaders in Washington, who are unable to conceal their visceral hatred of communism. Indeed, the peoples of Central America are not being subjected to any threat from Nicaragua or from outside the hemisphere; on the contrary, their enemy is an internal one, namely, hunger, poverty and social injustice created by imperialist exploitation. That is the disquieting truth that the detractors of revolutionary Nicaragua are attempting in vain to avoid. They always see the problems of Central America from the standpoint of the East-West conflict, a view they shamefully promulgate to justify their shady interventionist and aggressive designs. The people of revolutionary Nicaragua have dared to rise up against this injustice and against the diktat of American imperialism to follow a path of independent development better suited to their interests. That is why the present leaders in Washington, in their wounded pride, are attempting at all costs and by every means to overthrow the Sandinist Government.

141. The publication by the CIA of the manual "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare" [4/39/596, annex], intended for use by the Somoquist counter-revolutionary mercenaries and which envisages in certain cases the assassination of political personalities or even civilians, well illustrates the Machiavellian mentality of the opponents of revolutionary Nicaragua. It should be noted that in the past few days several American television networks have broadcast information about similar reprehensible activities by the CIA.

142. Another factor worsening the situation in Central America is the increasing military involvement of the United States in the civil war in El Salvador on the side of the existing régime against the progressive forces of the country. From \$5 million in 1979, American military aid to that country has grown to \$196 million this year. American military personnel in El Salvador are not there simply to train the Salvadorian army but are actively involved in operations, making reconnaissance flights over areas controlled by the revolutionary forces and directing artillery fire against revolutionary fighters and civilian targets. But, despite all that, the Salvadorian revolutionary forces, grouped around the FMLN-FDR, continue to gain in strength and to consolidate their bases in the rural areas, while at the political level for the past three years they have

continual' proposed negotiations with the Salvadorian régime.

143. The fact that President Duarte proposed to meet representatives of the FMLN-FDR on 15 October was recognition by the Salvadorian régime of those two national fronts as an important political force in the country, and they will have to be taken into account from now on. The next meeting will show us whether that move resulted from a true desire for peace or was a mere manoeuvre by the régime to hoodwink public opinion. For the fact is that the civil war is continuing and that the Salvadorian army, supported by the United States, is still bombing areas controlled by the patriotic forces and massacring innocent, defenceless civilians. In any case, in the interests of the Salvadorian people, the régime must negotiate in good faith with the FMLN-FDR.

144. The whole international community is in agreement in recognizing that the Central American conflict must be settled by political means and that that is the only means possible. That feeling was reaffirmed last year when the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 38/10, thus expressing its support for the efforts of the Contadora Group in the search for peace and co-operation in Central America, efforts that led to the drawing up of the Contadora Act of 7 September 1984. Demonstrating its good will and sincere desire for peace, Nicaragua agreed to sign that Act without reservation and without amendment. But that acceptance by Nicaragua led the United States and its faithful friends in Central America, which had originally said that they were in favour of the Act, to do an about-face under the pretext that the Act had to be amended and completed. That was the moment of truth. What happened simply revealed more clearly the true intentions of the leaders in Washington, who have never wished to settle the situation in the region by peaceful means. From now on the international community will see who really wants peace and who wants to obstruct it. The threat to peace in Central America comes not from Nicaragua but from the intervention and interference of the United States in the internal affairs of the countries of the region.

145. Furthermore, the provocative acts of the Pentagon along the coasts of Nicaragua recall the Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964, which gave Washington a pretext to order the bombing of North Viet Nam. The Pentagon wished to relive that experience with Nicaragua, but, as in the case of Viet Nam, it will inevitably suffer defeat, for Nicaragua is not Grenada and we have confidence in the determination with which the heroic people of Nicaragua will defend the achievements of its revolution.

146. However, as a peace-loving country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic fully supports the Contadora peace process, just as it unreservedly supports the attempts of Nicaragua's Government of National Reconstruction to reach a harmonious understanding with its neighbours. The Lao delegation welcomes draft resolutions A/39/L.6 and L.7, which are before us for consideration and whose adoption will contribute to the satisfactory solution of the problems of Central America.

147. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Almost a year has passed since the debate at the last session of the General Assembly on the situation in

Central America. Resolution 38/10, adopted at the end of that debate, condemned in particular "the acts of aggression against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the States of the region" and emphatically urged "the States of the region and other States to desist from or to refrain from initiating military operations intended to exert political pressure". The resolution affirmed that "respect for the sovereignty and independence of all States of the region is essential to ensure the security and peaceful coexistence of the Central American States". Finally, it also expressed the most resolute support for the efforts of the Contadora Group, which have now resulted in the drawing up and proposal of a constructive plan to settle the problem of Central America by the prompt signing and implementation of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America.

148. All of this provides the pre-conditions for improving the situation in Central America, but the good will of all, and primarily of the culprit mainly responsible for the tension in the region—the United States—is essential if they are to be implemented. It is not of the region, it is true, but the malice of its actions is felt in all the unresolved problems of the Central American countries.

149. The White House has been continually and relentlessly stepping up its policy of aggression and subversion and what amounts to an undeclared war against Nicaragua, as well as its policy of interference in the internal affairs of other States of the region. This policy has led in the past year to many new examples of loss of life and property.

150. It is sufficient to recall in this respect such acts of piracy as the mining of Nicaragua's ports and their approaches, causing loss of life among sailors and damage to ships from a number of countries. These actions were condemned by the International Court of Justice. In paragraph 41.B.1 of its decision of 10 May 1984³ we read that "the United States of America should immediately cease and refrain from any action restricting, blocking or endangering access to or from Nicaraguan ports, and, in particular, the laying of mines".

151. There have also been cases of artillery fire from the sea against targets in Nicaragua, of air-raids on oil-storage facilities in Nicaraguan ports and attacks against Nicaraguan territory by gangs trained and equipped by the United States from neighbouring States and under the leadership of American advisers. The CIA has issued extensive manuals for the piratical activities of its mercenaries with guidance in the techniques of economic sabotage, murder and attacks against the leaders of the Sandinist revolution, using criminals for this purpose.

152. For more than a decade now United States imperialism has been building up tension in the situation around revolutionary Cuba.

153. Grenada remains under the boot of the occupying Power, and it was that same boot that trampled underfoot General Assembly resolution 38/7, adopted a year ago, containing an appeal for the immediate cessation of armed intervention and the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Grenada.

154. By its actions in respect of Grenada the Government of the United States has demonstrated its complete contempt for generally accepted norms of international law and the lofty principles of the Charter of the United Nations. This is clear evidence

that Washington, in order to attain its rapacious aims, does not intend to take any account at all of the inalienable rights of the peoples to determine their own form of government and to choose their own economic, political and social system without any foreign interference, coercion, threats or limitations of any sort. Such a policy is an open act of defiance against the peoples of the world. The piratical attack on Grenada quite clearly showed the danger involved for the cause of peace and the freedom of peoples in the policy conducted in international affairs by the current United States Administration.

155. So-called military advisers of the United States, fully armed, are now working side by side with Salvadorian troops killing patriots of that country who are fighting for the freedom of their people. The United States military presence in Honduras has been growing steadily. In other words, United States reliance on terror and the use of force in Central America is continuing.

156. The cutting edge of this imperialist policy is now aimed primarily at Nicaragua. Why? The explanation for this by the United States is as simple as it is cynical. They argue that the United States finds "unacceptable" the policy of the Government of Nicaragua within the country and in the international arena. They find unacceptable its desire to pursue a policy in keeping, not with the interests of the United States, but with the interests of the Nicaraguan people. In the United States attempts are being made to cultivate an atmosphere of "anything goes" with regard to Nicaragua. In fact, the situation is now such that the issue of whether American interference in Nicaraguan affairs is permissible or not is not even being discussed. Instead they are drilling into people's heads the idea that it is "normal" and "lawful". Attempts are being made to force people to reconcile themselves to the aggression that is being prepared and to the inevitability of its being for the protection of the "vital interests" of the United States. With fulsome rhetoric they have been hypocritically holding forth about the need to defend democracy. We have already heard about that at this meeting. But one might ask quite legitimately: defence against whom, the defence of what democracy? The Nicaraguan workers and people have overthrown the dictatorial pro-American régime and for the first time they have established a free, democratic society which they are now building. They have realized that the "defence of democracy" American-style means broad and comprehensive support of counter-revolution, of gangs of thugs killing women, old men and children and burning down schools, hospitals, oil-storage facilities and coffee plantations.

157. The United States policy with regard to Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Grenada and other Latin American countries is a manifestation of the hegemonistic foreign policy of the United States and its desire for world domination and to suppress the national liberation movements.

158. As usual, they are dragging out the "red threat" bogymen. In Washington they are hypocritically trying to explain the anti-American sentiment in Central America and elsewhere in the world as resulting from the scheming of others, thus acting in accordance with the well-known propagandistic ploy of shifting the guilt to where it does not belong. But enough is enough. The problems of Latin America and Central America came into being long before the Cuban revolution and before the Nicaraguan and

Salvadorian peoples rose up in arms. For example, the United States attacked Nicaragua in 1854, 1894, 1898 and 1899 and occupied it for more than 20 years after 1912, in other words, long before the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia and the triumph of the Cuban people. It is none other than United States policy toward the peoples of Central America and elsewhere, which seeks to deny them the chance to decide their own affairs freely, as well as the exploitation by United States monopolies, which perpetuate poverty and social injustice, which are the source of anti-American, anti-imperialist sentiment.

159. The countries of Central America and the Caribbean basin and other regions of the world have long been considered by the United States as its own kind of private preserve. For many decades these States have been victims of the hegemonistic policy of American imperialism. Throughout all that period there has been not a single instance of the United States actually helping a single people in any region of the world to free itself from dictatorship and oppression. On the contrary, whenever a people in any country has risen up against slavery and oppression, the military might of the United States has been promptly at hand, ready to bring its own death-dealing club crashing down on those struggling for the people's freedom in order to return the deposed tyrants to power and make their rule even harsher. The long list of such crimes by the United States against the peoples of Central America and other peoples of the world has already been referred to in past and present General Assembly debates. All of these ignominious facts are now part of the sorry pages of the history of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

160. In carrying out its dangerous intrigues in Central America, the ruling circles in the United States have been disregarding the opinions of the peoples of those countries and taking no account whatever of the opinions of the States members of the Movement of non-aligned countries and other countries. In the final communiqué of the meeting of ministers and heads of delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, held in New York from 1 to 5 October, with reference to the situation in Central America, we once again find an appeal for "an immediate end to all threats, attacks and hostile acts against the people and Government of Nicaragua" [see A/39/560, annex, para. 83]. The Foreign Ministers of Central America, of the Contadora Group and of Western Europe declared that the problems of Central America "cannot be resolved by armed force, but only by political solutions springing from the region itself" and that they supported "the pacification measures which are being developed in the Contadora process" [see A/39/539, annex, para. 6].

161. It is well known that the Nicaraguan Government has given its unreserved support to the final document of the Contadora Group. It would seem only natural that the Latin American countries themselves should take the initiative in resolving their own problems and that they should themselves devise specific ways of doing this. But the United States has grown accustomed to its big-stick policy and to dictating its own terms and would find this unacceptable. That is why the United States has been exercising its power of veto in the Security Council and refusing to comply with the decision of the International Court of Justice or with unanimously

adopted resolutions of the United Nations. And that is why it has been undermining the initiatives of the Contadora Group, thereby making the situation in the region more critical.

162. The American ruling circles must understand present-day realities and end their policies based on interference, military intervention and all forms of oppression. They must agree to comply unswervingly with the principles and aims of the Contadora Act and with the arrangements established by the ratification and entry into force of the Additional Protocol to that Act. It is essential that a normal international situation be established in Central America to ensure the free and independent development of all States. That will help consolidate peace and security throughout the world, for the general good of mankind.

163. We shall therefore support the draft resolutions proposed respectively by Nicaragua and the Contadora Group, which are closely interrelated.

164. Mr. MBANZE (Mozambique): My Government has been following with great concern the evolution of the situation in Latin America, particularly that in Central America. During the last three years we have learned about the constant escalation of confrontation and of acts of destabilization and aggression in the subregion. The hostile acts and pressure against the countries of the region have contributed greatly to endangering peace and security, not only in Central America but in other regions as well. They have also resulted in exacerbating the economic and social constraints now confronting the sub-continent.

165. The international community has become increasingly conscious of the seriousness and gravity of the Central American crisis and the threat it poses to international peace and security. It is not by chance that the United Nations and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have on many occasions deplored the worsening of the climate of tension in the region and have called for urgent, appropriate measures to reverse the trend of events in the area. But these calls by the international community have met obstacles set up by those who are particularly responsible for the present situation in Central America. Evidence of that is the fact that we still have the question of Central America before us today.

166. The situation we are confronted with in Central America is that of non-compliance by some States within and outside the region with the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, particularly those concerning the right of peoples to choose their political, economic and social systems freely and without external interference and refraining from the use or threat of force against the independence and territorial integrity of States, as well as other relevant principles.

167. The Organization should not remain indifferent to the violation of its own principles. My delegation is convinced that we have reached the stage when we all need to reaffirm the United Nations concept that threats to international peace and security, from whatever source or in whatever region of the world, entail an obligation for all States to agree and to co-operate, regardless of their differences. Therefore, let us all agree and co-operate in the management of the crisis we are confronted with.

168. My delegation joined in the consensus on the adoption of resolution 38/10, on the situation in Central America. That resolution, together with Security Council resolution 530 (1983), addresses the most crucial elements to be taken into account in all efforts towards the establishment of a climate of peace, security and stability in the subregion, for those resolutions reaffirm the right of all the countries in the area to decide freely their own fate and clearly condemn the acts of aggression against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Central American States. Full compliance by all Member States with the provisions of these resolutions would undoubtedly constitute one of the ways out of the crisis situation now prevailing in that area.

169. When mentioning the situation in Latin America, and particularly in Central America, we cannot help commending the valuable and tireless efforts of the Contadora Group, a very active and practical regional instrument in the search for a peaceful diplomatic solution to the problems scourging Central America. The example set by the Contadora Group is one that Latin America and the whole international community should be proud of. It constitutes clear evidence of how delicate and complex questions can find a negotiated settlement if there is willingness on the part of all the parties concerned to co-operate.

170. It is now up to the countries of Central America urgently to make the legal commitments contained in the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, which is annexed to the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Central America [4/39/562]. In this context, my delegation commends Nicaragua's immediate acceptance, without any reservations or modifications, of the Contadora Act. We look forward to seeing other countries of Central America adopt similar positions. That would be the main foundation for a just and lasting peace in the area.

171. As to the situation in El Salvador, we welcome the recent talks between the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN-FDR. We consider this to be a step towards the establishment of a climate of peace in El Salvador.

172. Allow me before concluding my statement to reiterate the position of my Government concerning Central America. When addressing the General Assembly during its general debate early this month, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Mozambique stated:

"The People's Republic of Mozambique is in favour of a peaceful settlement of the problems in the region. Direct talks between Nicaragua and the United States are encouraging. While vehemently condemning the aggression perpetrated against the Nicaraguan people, we reiterate our support for the efforts being undertaken by the Contadora Group. Nicaragua's acceptance of the revised text of the Group's proposal is a positive step". [See 15th meeting, para. 64.]

173. In conclusion, let me once again make a strong appeal to all Member States to co-operate in the search for a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the problems facing Central America. The establishment of a climate of peace, security and prosperity in Central America demands total commitment from all of us.

174. The struggle continues.

175. Mr. ABDUL KADIR (Malaysia): My delegation joins those speaking in this debate on the situation in Central America in order to associate ourselves with the expressions of concern and sense of urgency regarding the current situation in that region. Developments have reached a critical but hopeful stage, and it seems to us vital that the international community lend its weight and authority to the voices of reason, moderation and peace that the Contadora process represents. The alternative is reversion to the dangerous trends that have engulfed the region and could still embroil it in an open conflict, with serious consequences to international peace and security and especially to the welfare and well-being of the people in the region. Central America is at a turning-point. We at the United Nations must do all we can to ensure that it turns in the direction of peace and national progress and away from death and destruction, thereby contributing to our untiring search for international peace, security and social justice.

176. The credit for the present developments must go, first of all, to the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex] and those responsible for it—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—who have shown what can be achieved by good will, persistence, professionalism and sheer hard work. They have, I might add, given renewed respectability to the profession of diplomacy.

177. Credit must also go to the five Central American countries themselves. What is at stake is their own independence, territorial integrity and way of life—in short, their own survival. There can be no higher stake than that. It must give the utmost satisfaction to all of us that, despite mutual suspicion and antagonism and recrimination, and despite the inherent complexities of a situation that is the product of historical, political and economic forces, some of which come from beyond their shores and beyond their immediate region, the countries of Central America have worked in earnest to follow the path of conciliation and co-operation. That path, we all know, is fraught with difficulties, and considering what is at stake, which, as I have already noted, is nothing less than national survival, it can only be expected that there may be many detours and hesitations. But it is the only path to peace, and the United Nations must lend its support to that effort and, above all, not place any obstacles in its way.

178. Malaysia also believes that the Contadora process and proposals have relevance far beyond the immediate issues facing Central America, important and urgent as these undoubtedly are. It is a genuine regional effort which seeks to isolate the region from the East-West ideological conflict. It seeks to deal with one of the fundamental questions of our times, namely, how to ensure that the awakening of peoples to freedom in all its manifestations, political as well as economic, and the management of their internal as well as external affairs and of their national resources, social justice, territorial integrity and self-determination can be conducted truly by and for the people directly concerned and in their own interest, without external interference in any form from near or far. The efforts of the Contadora Group, which have been as sophisticated as they have been painstaking, deserve the gratitude and support of us all.

179. For all these reasons, the people and Government of Malaysia, although physically far away from

Central America, feel emotionally close to the countries of the region and to the Contadora countries as they proceed on the path which, we pray, will lead them to peace, independence, justice and prosperity. Perhaps in different ways, at different times and with different intensities, the problems that they face are also the problems that other newly independent developing countries face. These problems can be resolved only in an international framework that upholds the indispensable norms of international conduct that are in fact enshrined in the Charter—the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, refraining from the threat or use of force, and respect for the right of peoples to choose their own political, economic and social system. These principles must be respected by all States from within or outside the region, whatever their size, whether near or far. They cannot be qualified by sophisticated arguments about variable contexts or varying circumstances.

180. Another dimension in facing these problems is economic. Malaysia is pleased to note that the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America is comprehensive in nature and includes commitments with regard to economic and social affairs in which co-operation on a regional basis has been stressed. We believe that, aside from the economic aspects, such co-operation would represent important steps in building a sense of regional cohesion and regional identity, which are essential elements in ensuring long-term peace and stability. We also hope that such co-operation would contribute to strengthening the economies of the Central American countries. In the final analysis, peace can be ensured only in an environment of progressive development and social justice. Stagnation and injustice are breeding grounds for conflict, which external actors often are only too happy to exploit.

181. Looking back at recent events in Central America, Malaysia for the present allows itself the luxury of cautious hope. All this is due to the efforts of the Contadora Group. At this delicate point in their labours, we believe everything should be done to encourage, and nothing done to obstruct, the Contadora spirit of careful conciliation, moderation and good will. It is for that reason that my delegation supports wholeheartedly the draft resolution submitted by the Contadora countries [A/39/L.6], which we hope will be adopted by acclamation. It is for that reason also that my delegation hopes that the delegation of Nicaragua will feel able to withdraw or at least not to insist on a vote on the draft resolution it has submitted [A/39/L.7/Rev.1]. My delegation in fact has no problem in supporting many of the elements of the proposed resolution; we do understand the sentiments of a country which feels—rightly or wrongly—that its sovereignty is threatened; and we note with satisfaction that Nicaragua has expressed its willingness to sign immediately and without reservation the Contadora Act of 7 September. Nevertheless, we believe that in the present circumstances, draft resolution A/39/L.7, even as revised, does not contribute in a positive way to the Contadora process. If this draft resolution is pressed, it can be expected that other countries in the region which also feel—again, rightly or wrongly—that their sovereignty is threatened will surely also find the need for similar resolutions to be adopted by the United Nations. Rhetoric, recrimination and rancour would again be introduced, and the difficult and complex

process of Contadora and the delicate and fragile spirit of Contadora would be imperilled. We believe such a development would be a major tragedy.

182. In conclusion, let me reiterate our admiration for the Contadora countries and our fervent support for their efforts, which we believe should be received with acclamation by the United Nations.

183. Mr. DESKER (Singapore): As a small State, Singapore has strongly supported regional initiatives to the problems arising in each region, as may be seen from our firm support for the initiative of the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations on the Cambodian question. My delegation firmly believes that the Contadora process represents a genuine regional initiative to resolve the problems affecting the Central American region. It presents the best opportunity to achieve a comprehensive political solution to the emerging crisis in Central America through political means. Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela deserve our commendation for their efforts to achieve a solution. The Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of 7 September 1984, is a draft comprehensive agreement which, if carried out by the parties concerned in the spirit in which it is intended, will assist in the process of establishing the conditions for peace and security in the region.

184. As the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group have observed, the objective of this effort was to find viable formulas which would reconcile the various interests and promote appropriate and firm political understandings that would guarantee regional security and respect for national sovereignty and independence of the States of the region. It is our hope that the political will exists to implement the understandings which have been arrived at.

185. As a small State in a region where the Cambodian conflict continues to be a major preoccupation, Singapore firmly believes that no State should be permitted to impose its will on its neighbours. Absolute security for any State must mean absolute insecurity for all other States in the region. The States of the Central American region can coexist only in a climate of relative security.

186. It is these concerns which have led my Government to support the view that the Central American Governments should speed up their consultations with the Contadora Group with the aim of concluding the negotiating process and permitting the early signing of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. It is our hope that this would lead to full compliance with the commitments provided for in the Act and the entry into force of the various mechanisms for its implementation. We would also urge all States with ties to and interests in the region to endorse the purposes and principles of the Contadora Act by acceding to its Additional Protocol and to uphold the letter and spirit of their commitments.

187. While the approach taken by the Contadora Group represents the best hope of success in the search for a comprehensive political solution to the problems of Central America, it is necessary for us to look at the root causes of the conflicts within the region. My delegation shares the view that the turmoil has its origins in the grave socio-economic crisis in Central America and the pressures for political change arising from a desire for more just

and equitable societies. It is clear, however, that while the conflicts do not arise from East-West rivalry, the competition between the military blocs has exacerbated them. The harsh rhetoric that we have heard during this debate demonstrates this point.

188. It is also a matter of regret that the arms buildup in the region is continuing, as are acts of aggression, border incidents, destabilizing operations and the presence of foreign military forces, as noted in the Secretary-General's report (A/39/562).

189. There have also been several positive developments which deserve attention. The dialogue between the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN-FDR on 15 October 1984 represented a major breakthrough in the search for national reconciliation in El Salvador. While the process of attaining a broad, effective and lasting political reconciliation is likely to be a difficult one, my delegation is encouraged to know that the first steps have been made.

190. Secondly, my delegation welcomes the dialogue which was initiated at the end of May 1984 between the United States and Nicaragua. Six meetings have been held between the special envoy for Central America of the United States and the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua. It is the hope of my delegation that these consultations will allow both Governments to arrive at an accommodation which would take into account their respective interests while facilitating the creation of mutual understanding, leading to the restoration of peace and co-operation in the region.

191. Thirdly, it is encouraging to note that elections are being conducted in Nicaragua and Guatemala. We hope that these elections will have the broadest possible participation, enabling a genuine process of democratization to occur in these States.

192. My delegation wishes to reiterate that it believes that every State in the region must have the right to determine its own future, free of foreign interference and intervention. It is for the peoples of each State to decide their own future. We reaffirm the need for strict adherence to the principle of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal and external affairs of States. My delegation therefore condemns acts of armed aggression and subversion. We do not believe that militarily powerful States, particularly the super-Powers, should be permitted to enforce their will on smaller, militarily insignificant and economically weak States. Nor do we believe in the notion of revolutions without frontiers, of the right of States to impose their political will on neighbouring States. It is vital in this era of a multipolar state system that we accept the existence of differing models of political, social and economic organization. Only if this reality is accepted can the real threat of conflict and war in Central America be avoided.

193. Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): Central America is today, without any doubt, a region of the world where there is a disquieting boiling-up of all the elements of a conflict that threatens to degenerate suddenly, at any time, into a conflagration with unforeseeable and uncontrollable consequences for international peace and security. It is as if the events in Central America, propelled by the irrepressible logic of confrontation, were ascending the steps of tension almost at the

explosion point. Hence, it was obviously urgent to seek ways to defuse this situation.

194. Motivated by legitimate concern and anxious to demonstrate their support for a country that is a member of their Movement, as well as for peoples to which they are linked by natural solidarity, the non-aligned countries reacted by unequivocally reaffirming such universal principles as the right of peoples to self-determination and by an increased manifestation of their support for the quest for a negotiated political settlement. Such a quest required from the very outset a clear and lucid analysis of the events in Central America, as was stressed by the heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries during their seventh conference, held at New Delhi in March 1983. They stated:

"Central America faced a serious political, social and economic crisis brought about for the most part by the traditional repressive power structure and by national economic structures that produce poverty, inequality and misery and aggravated by the interference and intervention to which those countries have been subjected since the end of the last century".⁴

195. Indeed, the least that one can say is that Central America has for a long time been one of the regions of the world most subjected to the tragic triad of exploitation, poverty and oppression. Thus, it was inevitable that there should emerge and develop there traditions of struggles experienced and waged because of an ineluctable necessity, but also pursued in a stubborn quest for a peace that would respect the legitimate rights of the peoples, above all the elementary and essential right to self-determination and to the pursuit of economic and social development free from all foreign interference.

196. That assessment by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries of the situation in Central America and its call for a negotiated settlement were taken up and emphasized by the Security Council, which in its resolution 530 (1983) reaffirmed "the right of Nicaragua and of all the other countries of the area to live in peace and security, free from outside interference" and commended the efforts of the Contadora Group and urged the pursuit of those efforts. Similarly, the General Assembly, in its resolution 38/10, reaffirmed "the right of all the countries of the region to live in peace and to decide their own future, free from all outside interference or intervention, whatever pretext may be adduced" and expressed "its firmest support for the Contadora Group and [urged] it to persevere in its efforts, which enjoy the effective support of the international community and the forthright co-operation of the interested countries in or outside the region".

197. In a turbulent international atmosphere characterized by the recrudescence of power policies and by a tendency to replace the logic of dialogue by the logic of confrontation, the peace initiative determinedly undertaken by the Contadora Group was certainly a wager, because it had all the symbolic value of a true effort to rehabilitate dialogue as a method for the political settlement of conflicts. By patiently encouraging an exchange of views among the countries of Central America, Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela were able, by means of an agreed initiative, to impose the optimism of determination on the pessimism engendered by the complexity of the conflict and the realities of the stakes.

Indeed, the greatest merit of the Contadora Group is that it stopped an almost inexorable process of deterioration of relations among the Central American countries and lent consistency and credibility to the praiseworthy alternative of negotiation to replace the vicious circle of confrontation.

198. That being the case, the objective of our debate today is clear. The General Assembly must unanimously renew its support for the Contadora Group and for the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, which that Group arrived at through an effort of imagination, perseverance and a devotion to which it is appropriate to pay a deserved tribute here. Similarly, we must welcome the positive attitude of the Government of Nicaragua, which has expressed a willingness to adhere to the Contadora Act without any reservations.

199. Even if there are still difficulties connected with the adherence by countries concerned to this Act, we are convinced that it is an adequate basis for the advent of an era of peace and co-operation among the countries of the region, if only foreign interference and intervention are neutralized and the right of the peoples of the region to decide their fate freely is respected.

200. By the same token, a striking example will have been given of the adequacy of the natural regional frameworks for the quest for negotiated solutions to conflicts among third world countries, which also know that solutions are facilitated when a fallacious East-West dimension, artificially introduced, is removed. That is the very meaning of the deep conviction expressed by the non-aligned countries, during their ministerial meeting at the present session of the General Assembly, when they "rejected attempts to erroneously characterize the struggles of peoples for independence and human dignity as falling within the context of East-West confrontation that denies them the right to determine their own destiny and realize their legitimate aspirations" [see A/39/560, annex, para. 6].

201. Moreover, the same concern was enshrined in a very timely way by the International Court of Justice in its Order of 10 May 1984,⁵ in which it reaffirmed, among other things, with all the solemnity stemming from its lofty position as the universal legal authority, Nicaragua's right to the sovereign exercise of its political independence, and enjoined that the destabilizing activities carried out against that country should cease.

202. On the same lines, since the dynamics of negotiation seems to be spreading through the region, we must express the hope that a true desire to respect the right of peoples to dignity and a genuine determination to put an end not only to the armed conflict but also to the centuries-old oppression and exploitation will guide the negotiations that have begun in El Salvador.

Mr. Moushoutas (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

203. Thus, the General Assembly must manifest its support for every step in the right direction, every bit of progress towards the fulfilment of the just aspirations of the peoples of Central America. That would be an excellent way of showing renewed encouragement of the assiduous pursuit of the common objective of all peoples, namely, peace with freedom, peace with social justice, peace with economic well-being and political independence.

204. Mr. BASSOLE (Burkina Faso) (*interpretation from French*): In speaking in the debate on the situation in Central America, my delegation does not intend to yield to despair.

205. In connection with Central America, we wish to inform the international community of our fear in the face of a situation that is constantly deteriorating and which the Secretary-General described in his report as "remaining" very grave.

206. Military acts of destabilization and economic blockades combine in the region to frustrate the efforts to find a peaceful solution that have been made during the past two years by the Contadora Group.

207. When, as President of the Security Council, I had the honour of welcoming the Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, who came to submit the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, I believed that that situation would soon be a matter of the past. Unfortunately, recent developments make that seem unlikely. It is difficult to believe that, as has been stated at another time in another place, a "democratic solution is the main and sole objective" sought in Central America, when acts and facts constantly deny that assertion.

208. In point of fact, Central America does not need others, no matter what their reasons, to solve its problems for it, because those problems can find real solutions only through a genuine Latin American effort. As the President of Mexico rightly said, "The region is capable of finding its own ways of facing the problems that confront it." Therefore, what Latin America needs is that we refrain from sapping its efforts to find its own solutions. Never has that region been closer to the solution it seeks, and the United Nations must make its own contribution.

209. In the past, an appeal was made by a bipartite national commission in favour of a vigorous diplomatic strategy and an effort at negotiation to settle the conflict and include Nicaragua in a regional settlement that would guarantee lasting security and national independence for all the peoples of Central America. We are firmly convinced that that appeal did not fall on deaf ears. We believe that the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America fully meets the concerns of all because it is above all the result of a process of intensive consultation and a wide-ranging exchange of views with the Governments of all the States of Central America. It is the result of an effort to integrate the different contributions and bring together the points on which there was still some disagreement.

210. The international community must not miss this opportunity to make a positive contribution to strengthening the foundations that have thus been laid for peaceful coexistence, détente and the promotion of economic and social development in the region. We believe that this is a unique opportunity to reduce the threats to international peace and security posed by the situation in Central America.

211. In saying that we are not closing our eyes to the fact that difficulties, and by no means minor ones, still stand in the way of the successful outcome of two years of effort, patience and dedication. Those difficulties were obvious when Nicaraguan harbours were mined, and they are still clear today from the manual prepared by specialists in foul crimes in

order to foster and perpetuate in that same country their "neutralizations".

212. Yesterday my delegation firmly condemned the attempts to impose an economic blockade on the Sandinist régime by mining Nicaragua's ports. Today we condemn equally firmly the rampant political intolerance that is willing even to bring in murderers to achieve its ends. We are convinced that those who die today for their political convictions tomorrow will rise from their ashes even stronger, even more convinced and more determined than ever to die again if need be for their just cause.

213. We believe that the time has come for all the States of Central America and all the States directly concerned to set aside their rancour and recognize each other's right to independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the right to live in peace under the political system of its choice and the right to live without foreign pressure or interference of any kind. Those fundamental rights are recognized for each people in the world and in no way threaten the peace and security of any other people.

214. My delegation welcomes Nicaragua's official declaration of its readiness to sign the Contadora Act without any amendment or reservation. We therefore appeal to the international community not to allow the hope that the countries of Central America, in particular, place in the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America to die.

215. We call for the cessation of military acts of destabilization of any kind.

216. This is the price of peace in Central America. Is it too much for us to pay?

217. Mr. SKOFENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Among the crises which represent a threat to peace, the conflict in Central America arouses concern because of the unceasing tension, the expansion of military activities and the increasingly direct involvement of the United States of America.

218. The continued military presence of the United States in this region has become the principal element in its foreign policy. One need only acquaint oneself with Security Council document S/16744¹ to realize the true scale of United States military activities with regard to but one small Central American country, Nicaragua. There are American naval vessels cruising offshore; practically continuous intelligence-gathering flights are carried out over its territory; and continued military manoeuvres and training unfold near its borders.

219. The whole world was profoundly indignant at the mining of Nicaraguan ports carried out with the assistance of the United States and the direct involvement of its agencies and nationals under their control. That direct involvement in military activities is confirmed by the presence of American mercenaries among those who are carrying out these banditlike air attacks on Nicaragua.

220. Recently we have learned of the so-called handbook prepared by the CIA for the bandits who are fighting against the Government and the people of Nicaragua. Indeed—if one may call it teaching material—one finds instructions on how to kidnap and kill officials, destroy public buildings and blackmail the peaceful population. These are manifestations of the policy of crude pressure on Nicaragua, a country whose only "crime" has been that its people chose the path of independent development not to

the liking of the United States, which is *de facto* conducting an undeclared war against Nicaragua.

221. The United States Administration has intensified the struggle which it has been carrying on against Cuba for two and a half decades already on the imaginary pretext of a "Cuban threat" in Central America, which the United States regards as its own backyard. Washington has intensified the economic blockade of Cuba and increased its campaign of threats and blackmail against Cuba, while continually brandishing its weapons against that country.

222. An extreme manifestation of arbitrariness and a crude violation of the norms of international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations was the pirate-like attack by the United States on Grenada in the autumn of last year. That aggression against Grenada shows that any non-aligned country could be a victim of armed intervention by the United States if the course of its Government is not acceptable to the White House.

223. Thus the Central American and Caribbean strategy of the United States, the basis of which is the policy and practice of pressure and force, has created a serious threat to the vital interests of the peoples and countries of the region and led to the emergence of a source of tension threatening international peace and security.

224. It is perfectly natural that such a policy and practice should encounter increasing resistance on the part of the peoples of the region, who have been aroused by the aggressiveness of American imperialism. Confronted by this American threat, the people of Nicaragua has joined ranks with its Government of national rebirth and is resolutely determined to repel the aggressor. Despite the difficulties caused by the harshness of the Somoza régime and the policy of destabilization conducted by the United States, there have been major social, economic and political transformations in Nicaragua and the first economic successes have been achieved. Its people is preparing for a genuine democratic election, and Nicaragua has been enjoying well-deserved authority in the international arena.

225. In response to the aggressive intent of the United States, the people of Cuba, along with other peace-loving peoples of the region, also are manifesting a high degree of alertness and self-restraint, by favouring a peaceful settlement of the problems of Central America.

226. In El Salvador the struggle against dictatorship and for creating a democratic society is broadening. The national patriotic forces are steadily seeking a way to achieve genuine freedom and independence for their country.

227. The freedom-loving people of Grenada have not accepted the continued occupation and American diktat.

228. A positive contribution in the search for a solution to the Central American problems has been made by Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. The revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America proposed by the Contadora Group [4/39/562, annex] has been broadly supported both inside and outside the region, as can be seen from the statements of representatives of the overwhelming majority of States at the current session of the General Assembly.

229. It is quite significant that Washington has rejected the positive efforts of the Contadora Group

and is doing everything possible to prevent the normalization of the situation in Central America. The Contadora Act is not to the taste of the United States, primarily because it is acceptable to the Government and the people of Nicaragua. The implementation of the provisions of that document would deprive the United States of the possibility of interfering in the internal affairs of the countries of the region. Thus the United States has once again demonstrated that it is counting on an aggravation and not a reduction of tension and is striving in every way to impose its will in the region. It has become quite obvious now that the principal obstacle to the settlement of the conflict in Central America is the political line followed by the United States.

230. To prevent the situation in the region from getting out of control and to thwart a new military intervention by the United States, only by resistance to imperialism and reaction through determination and unity in the struggle can the peoples of the Central American countries and all peace-loving forces resolve these difficult problems peacefully on the basis of justice and without external interference.

231. The Ukrainian SSR is decisively in favour of a just political solution to the problem of Central America by negotiation; it supports the constructive position of the Government of Nicaragua and the efforts of the countries of the Contadora Group for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America. We feel that an important role in this process should also be played by the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole.

232. Mr. MASHINGA/IDZE (Zimbabwe): The rapidly and progressively deteriorating situation in Central America causes a great deal of concern to the international community. Indeed, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries have been unanimous in describing it as a threat to international peace and security. The concern and anxiety of the international community over developments in the volatile Central American region have also been clearly demonstrated by the fact that this item on the Security Council's agenda has received greatest attention during the past two years and by the consensus adoption of resolution 38/10 by the Assembly last year.

233. Alarmed by the relentlessly and critically worsening situation in the region, four Latin American Governments have embarked on a courageous initiative to search for peaceful and lasting solutions to the problems threatening the peace, stability and security of the region. I am referring here to the Contadora initiative jointly conceived and undertaken by the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. All people of good will in Central America, and indeed in the entire international community, expressed and lent their support to the Contadora peace efforts, as eloquently demonstrated by General Assembly resolution 38/10, Security Council resolution 530 (1983), and the Political Declaration adopted by the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at New Delhi in March 1983.⁶

234. Regrettably, however, the unanimous warnings and appeals of the international community do not seem to have had much positive impact on those concerned. According to the Secretary-General, in his report [4/39/562] submitted to the Assembly and to

the Security Council in accordance with Assembly resolution 38/10 and Council resolution 530 (1983), frontier incidents and acts of subversion and sabotage with the consequent losses in human life and material damage have not only continued to characterize the Central American scene, but have, in some cases, also even increased during the period. Indeed, this year alone, one of the countries of the region, Nicaragua, has been compelled to appeal to the Security Council no fewer than three times. Nicaragua's quest for peace and security, for itself and indeed for the entire region, was also extended to the judiciary organ of this Organization, the International Court of Justice, again to no avail.

235. A truly dirty war is raging in and around Nicaragua, and in this the involvement and role of forces foreign to the region are well known to the international community. The air raids against Nicaragua, the mining of that country's territorial waters and main seaports, the planning of political assassinations in that country, and all the campaigns of misinformation and subversive propaganda against Nicaragua's Government are all conceived, planned, directed and financed by a neighbouring Government and a Member of this Organization, in blatant violation of its Charter.

236. The Assembly must once again make it very clear, in one strong voice, that intervention and interference in the internal affairs of Nicaragua or, for that matter, of any country in Central America, is a violation of Charter principles, which are the basis of accepted inter-State relations. Nicaragua and all the countries of the region have enough problems of their own, even without those exported from outside. The peoples of the region know those problems very well, and better than any of us from outside. They are not incapable of solving those problems on their own, and they have not asked outsiders to intervene in their affairs. All they need, and very badly need, is to be left alone and to be given an opportunity to consult among themselves and discuss their problems in an atmosphere which is free from external interference. Surely, that is not too much to ask for.

237. As already stated, the Contadora Group's peace efforts are an eloquent demonstration of the strong desire of the peoples of Central America for peace and their ability to analyse their problems and to find realistic solutions to those problems. My delegation wishes to join the many voices which have already paid a tribute to the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela for their efforts and especially for having produced the revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. This revised Act is a very well-conceived, balanced and realistic approach to the question of the situation in Central America. We also wish to commend those countries of the region, such as Nicaragua, for example, which have already expressed their readiness and preparedness to sign the new document immediately and without changing it. It is our sincere hope in this regard that Nicaragua's statesman-like example will be emulated by all the other countries directly concerned.

238. Another example of an encouraging local initiative towards defusing internal and regional tension is the recent meeting between the President of El Salvador and the leaders of the FMLN-FDR. Although no tangible results seem to have come out of the meeting, we nevertheless feel that it represents an important initiative by the people of El Salvador

to solve their problems. It is our hope, therefore, that no external interference will frustrate the people of El Salvador in their efforts to engage in more serious dialogue in the interest of their country and for the benefit of the Central American region as a whole.

239. Finally, these and similar regional and national peace efforts and initiatives, no matter how well conceived, have very little or no chance at all of succeeding as long as external intervention and interference persist. That is why we think that it is important for the Assembly to demand the strictest respect for the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in Central America and to demand of countries outside the region to respect the wishes, views, ideas and judgements of the peoples of that region.

240. In this same regard, we wish to support those who have already requested the Assembly to adopt the draft resolution [A/39/L.6] submitted by Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. The draft resolution prepared and submitted by Nicaragua [A/39/L.7/Rev.1], which aims at achieving the same goals, should also be similarly adopted.

241. Mr. WASIUDDIN (Bangladesh): The General Assembly, for the second time, is deliberating the agenda item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives". The Security Council, however, met a number of times recently to consider this item. For our deliberation, we have before us the report of the Secretary-General [A/39/562].

242. The Bangladesh delegation listened with great interest to the statements by the preceding speakers, who expressed grave concern at the prevailing situation in Central America. The representatives of the countries directly involved or deeply interested in the region also dwelt at length on developments in the region. My delegation therefore does not wish to go into the details of the situation. However, we emphasize that Bangladesh fully shares the concern of the international community over the present serious situation in Central America. We also share the overwhelming perception that any outbreak of hostilities would further aggravate the situation and threaten both regional and international peace and security.

243. Recent developments have once again demonstrated the need for a constructive debate directed towards a meaningful dialogue aimed at understanding and reconciliation. At the same time, we should be careful not to get involved in any deliberations which might result in further polarization and the deepening of mistrust and mutual recrimination. The situation clearly demands self-restraint, moderation and vision on the part of all the parties concerned. It is our firm conviction that peace and stability in any region can be built only on the basis of shared aspirations and mutual accommodation.

244. Last year the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 38/10, which comprehensively covered various aspects of the issue. We are all aware that the resolution was the product of prolonged and painstaking efforts, notably on the part of the member States of the Contadora Group—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—with a view to reconciling the existing differences between the countries of the region and in developing a consensus in the Assembly. We also commend the admirable spirit of accommodation and compromise which was dem-

onstrated on that occasion by the States directly involved.

245. The Bangladesh delegation sincerely hoped and believed that the adoption of a consensus resolution at the last session would positively influence the situation in the region. We lent our full support to the timely and valuable efforts of the Contadora Group of countries, as we firmly believed that such a regional endeavour was more likely to succeed for the simple reason that the countries of the region are in a position to evaluate the situation more comprehensively. The members of the Contadora Group, with which my country maintains friendly and cordial relations, have already been able to attain a substantial degree of progress. Their noble endeavours have been widely appreciated. The Secretary-General, in his report on the item, has also noted with profound satisfaction the intelligent and vigorous contribution made by the Contadora Group with a view to eliminating the causes of tension in the region. He also made the following assessment: "The efforts of the Contadora Group are especially important in view of the persistent gravity of the situation in Central America." [*Ibid.*, para. 8.]

246. The Secretary-General's report also reviews the developments during the past year. There have been accusations and counter-accusations regarding instances of interference and intervention, aggressive and provocative acts and the threat or use of force in the region. During the present debate we have also heard such accounts from the representatives of the countries directly involved. My delegation regrets that attempts are being made to view developments in the region in the context of an East-West confrontation. Such attempts will only exacerbate the situation and retard the process of the normalization of relations between the countries of the region through dialogue and negotiations.

247. My delegation has studied with interest the revised draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, which is annexed to the Secretary-General's report. We understand that the draft Act, which was considered at the seventh joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group and of the Central American countries, held on 7 September 1984 at Panama City, has already been transmitted to the heads of State of the five Central American countries with a request to communicate their views by 15 October. This significant Contadora initiative is the outcome of a long and arduous process of dialogue and discussion between the countries of the region and has been pursued in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The document, we are happy to note, reaffirms, *inter alia*, the vital principles of the inadmissibility of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States; the sovereign equality of States; the peaceful settlement of disputes; and non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. These principles have universal application and are particularly relevant in the context of the Central American region.

248. My delegation shares the perception expressed in the Contadora Act that peace and confidence in the region can be restored only through unconditional respect for the principles of international law, particularly the principle of the right of peoples freely to choose their own form of political, economic and social systems. The document also recognizes the

importance of creating, promoting and strengthening the democratic systems in all countries of the region and emphasizes that acts of subversion or sabotage and the use of the territory of one State for undertaking operations affecting the security of another State is contrary to the fundamental norms of international law and peaceful coexistence.

249. We are aware that not all the countries of the region have yet been able to accept all the provisions of the revised Act. The patient and arduous Contadora efforts, therefore, have not yet been able to achieve final success. Given the complexities of the situation, we should approach it with patience and understanding.

250. My delegation believes that from the current debate on the situation in Central America could come a renewed appeal to the countries directly involved to speed up their consultations with the Contadora Group with a view to reaching a regional consensus for the restoration of peace and security and the enhancement of economic and social development in the region. Any undue delay will further aggravate and compound the situation, thereby making it more difficult to reach an agreement.

251. In conclusion, permit me to reiterate our conviction that everything possible should be done to promote and encourage the current process of dialogue and consultations, with the assistance of the Contadora Group, in order to expedite the conclusion of a final agreement on the issue. It will indeed be a red-letter day in the history of this strife-stricken world if the noble efforts of the Contadora Group are crowned with success to usher in the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. My delegation pledges its full support and co-operation to the President in his endeavours to that end.

252. Mr. BLANCO (Uruguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The United Nations has made known its opinion on the matter before us in the form of decisions adopted unanimously by the Security Council and by consensus by the General Assembly. Among the provisions of these resolutions I think we should stress the following: the reaffirmation of the fundamental principles of the Charter that are applicable to the case, particularly those concerning non-intervention, self-determination and the non-use or threat of force; the reaffirmation of the right of all countries in the region to live in peace and security and to decide their own future, free from foreign interference; the condemnation of all acts of aggression against all the States of the region, including terrorist acts and sabotage; and the granting of full support to the efforts of the Contadora Group.

253. The debates in the Security Council and the General Assembly, including the present debate, have allowed and continue to allow the majority of the States Members of the Organization to express their views. Despite the wide divergencies which undoubtedly exist, a number of important areas of agreement have been revealed which I wish to stress and on the basis of which it was possible to work out and adopt the resolutions without opposition.

254. My delegation prefers to highlight what unites us rather than what separates us. Thus it is useful to stress some of these areas of agreement. The situation in Central America is the result of a complex series of internal, bilateral, regional and extra-regional factors, all of which should be tackled by means of just and equitable solutions. It is the right of all States to find

their own national solutions, without interference from outside and without interfering in the affairs of others. Peaceful solutions must be found through dialogue and negotiation. The primordial role of the Contadora Group must be recognized and its efforts must be supported.

255. It is in the light of all this and taking advantage of this common ground that the Contadora Group has made its efforts. Among those efforts we must emphasize the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America,² the Document of Objectives¹ and, more recently, the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of 7 September 1984.

256. The work accomplished by the Contadora Group deserves the greatest praise and respect. It has managed to establish a smooth regional dialogue, thus helping avoid irreparable situations; it has set in motion a process of negotiation conducive to peaceful solutions; it has submitted a series of proposals for tackling the Central America situation which, while recognizing its complexities and the multiple factors involved, can lead to a future of co-operation; it has obtained a very encouraging response from the countries of the region; and, finally, its effort is a real Latin American effort, free from foreign influences. This undoubtedly represents progress, starting from a situation that seemed condemned to speedy and irreversible deterioration or, at the best, to stagnation and chronic violence.

257. To this we must add as a very important element the various bilateral contacts that have contributed to reducing tension and solving particularly sensitive aspects. These efforts combine with the multilateral ones and help support the general process towards peace and security in the area.

258. All this progress was achieved despite the many difficulties that undoubtedly exist and it is an important step in the effort to bring about peace. This effort should be continued.

259. First of all, we must reaffirm the determined support of the international community for the Contadora Group and strongly encourage Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela to continue their efforts until the process is concluded. In this connection, the delegation of Uruguay lends its fullest support to the draft resolution submitted by the countries of the Contadora Group [A/39/L.6].

260. The joint communiqué issued in Madrid by that group of countries on 17 October 1984 [A/39/604, annex] outlines the present stage of negotiations, which are intended to lead to the early signing of the Contadora Act. These provided an opportunity for consultations between the countries of Central America and the Group, which has taken into account those comments made by the countries concerned that are in keeping with the spirit of Contadora and could contribute to making the provisions of the Act more precise without altering the balance achieved in the document. The communiqué explains that some topics mentioned as open to clarification and modification are those referring to the machinery for verification and control of the commitments undertaken and their chronological implementation.

261. Bearing in mind the stage now beginning, it is pertinent to reaffirm our full support for the joint efforts of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela and at the same time to urge all the parties directly concerned to speed up their consultations so that a

speedy and happy culmination of the Contadora process may be achieved. At the same time it is necessary to urge all States to co-operate actively in the achievement of this objective, above all by avoiding any actions that could prejudice the work of the Contadora Group or lessen the united support that the Group deserves.

262. The serious events in Central America could easily give rise to a debate that would smack of confrontation, with denunciations and recriminations on all sides. My delegation prefers to see in those events—in all serious events—a motive and a powerful incentive for us to create as soon as possible the conditions necessary for a lawful peace which will benefit all parties and within the context of which the principles of non-intervention and self-determination will be respected strictly and unselectively.

263. Mr. MOHAMMED (Trinidad and Tobago): The problems facing the countries of Central America have existed for far too long, and my delegation views with considerable dismay not only the fact that there has been no alleviation of the resulting very serious and potentially explosive situation but also that, on the contrary, there seems to have been an escalation of the problems.

264. My delegation shares the view that some of the predicaments faced by the countries of Central America have their roots in historical circumstances and in domestic social and economic factors and that these circumstances can be traced to various forms of colonial exploitation which appear to have had an impact on these social and economic issues. This resultant interaction has tended to accentuate the difficulties. Unhappily, these problems have been compounded in recent times by external factors. Specifically, the militarization of the subregion has resulted in violence, conflict, human suffering and instability. The international community must be concerned with the present situation in Central America.

265. The people of Central America have a right to peace and stability; they have a right to democratic processes and institutions; they have a right to choose their own systems and values; and they have an inalienable right to human dignity and human rights. My delegation affirms that these rights must be upheld and respected.

266. My delegation has studied the report of the Secretary-General [A/39/562] very carefully. We should like to commend the Secretary-General for his active interest in this matter and, like every other member of the international community, wish to pay a tribute to the members of the Contadora Group for the strenuous efforts they have made, and continue to make, to resolve the crisis in Central America. We are convinced that it is only within this framework that peace and stability can come to the subregion of Central America.

267. My delegation has noted the very prompt response by the Government of Nicaragua, which has subscribed to the revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of September 1984. Even though the Government of Nicaragua may have entertained some measure of doubt and difficulty with some aspects of the revised Act, its swift acceptance of it is, in the view of my delegation, an indication of its urgent desire for peace, stability and security.

268. We appeal to the other countries of Central America to conclude their consideration of the Contadora Act so that they too may subscribe to it without much delay. While we are prepared to accept some element of delay for genuine reasons such as consultations and negotiations, my delegation would deplore any attempt to subvert the efforts of the Contadora Group.

269. We appeal also to other countries having an interest in Central America, whether directly or indirectly, to support the Contadora Act by promoting and fostering conditions which will permit a start in the implementation of some of its provisions. We also appeal to all parties concerned to show a spirit of accommodation and of compromise so that the efforts of the Contadora Group, resolution 38/10 and any resolutions that may be adopted at this session will not become dead letters.

270. In the view of my delegation, the present crisis in Central America can be satisfactorily resolved only by political and diplomatic means. A military solution is totally unacceptable, and any attempt to impose one can lead only to deepening the wounds and rendering the situation more intractable.

271. My delegation joins in the universal appeal for a restoration of peace and stability in the subregion, for non-intervention in its internal affairs, whether by countries outside the subregion or by those within it, for social justice and the recognition of the human dignity and human rights of the people in the subregion, for economic advancement and prosperity, and for the resumption of the efforts that were being made prior to the present crisis by the Central American sub-region to achieve economic and technical integration.

272. Finally, the Trinidad and Tobago delegation considers the Contadora process to be the only viable mechanism for a peaceful resolution of the problems of Central America, and we urge the international community to endorse the efforts of the Contadora Group.

273. Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): The situation in Central America, which is similar to the overall situation in the entire Latin American continent, is dangerously sad and painful in spite of all the efforts made and good will demonstrated by the countries of the region in order to resolve the existing conflicts.

274. When this issue was debated at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, everyone here was earnestly looking forward to an end to United States intervention in the internal affairs of the countries of the region and hence to an end to the prevailing hostilities. A year has elapsed, and the situation has become worse instead of better.

275. Throughout this year, the United States press and other media have been denigrating the Sandinist revolution of Nicaragua. They have been disseminating distorted information about the Government of Nicaragua, thereby deceiving and misleading public opinion in the United States in order to try further to justify the unjustifiable United States military and intelligence operations in that country. The herds of mercenaries and the remnants of the Somoza régime, with shamelessly advertised American support, have been trying—although in vain—to destabilize that most popular régime, which the oppressed people of Nicaragua sacrificed so much to establish and for

which they are prepared to sacrifice so much more to safeguard.

276. State terrorism is a major function of the present United States Administration all over the world, and particularly in Nicaragua, but only in the context of the present election campaign in the United States was the mining of Nicaraguan harbours correctly identified as an act of State terrorism. Had it not been for the crashing of a United States aircraft, who could ever convince the United States Administration that top officials of the CIA were illegally orbiting over Nicaraguan airspace for their covert intelligence purposes?

277. Apart from all political arguments and the ramifications in terms of violations of international law, we have a very serious and puzzling, yet simple, question. Why is the United States Government so much involved in destruction, fire, murder, espionage, bloodshed and violations? Why does it feel so insecure? As we have said before, the entire population of Nicaragua is about 3 million, whereas the United States has at least 10 million registered addicts. What is the rationale for this United States obsession with Nicaragua, and why this unequal confrontation?

278. We have always heard Nicaraguan officials stating in the General Assembly and in the Security Council that they are ready to talk with the United States authorities and to resolve all the differences peacefully. They have deliberately refrained from condemning anybody, so as not to add insult to any possible injury, and have actually extended the hand of friendship even to the United States. We just cannot understand why there is no positive response from the arrogant United States Administration. This attitude is definitely contrary to all accepted international norms.

279. The United States Government ruled out bilateral negotiations with the Sandinist Government and, in order to delay the ongoing peace process, emphatically proposed that the differences should be resolved regionally. Of course, when the Contadora Group started its process, the United States imperialists were not expecting an internationally recognized and comprehensive Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America; they were simply trying to buy time for their acts of aggression against the revolutionaries of the region and to find an opportunity to fight and roll back the real freedom fighters and to defeat the revolutionary movements. They wanted time to send more mercenaries to the region, more military advisers to El Salvador, more armed forces to Honduras, more CIA operatives and hated counter-revolutionaries to the southern and northern parts of liberated Nicaragua, more naval task forces to the waters of the region and, above all, to send their army of occupation to the tiny island of Grenada, as if to play "Six Million Dollar Man" or "Mission Impossible", which is popular nowadays. However, in spite of all those evil actions, they failed to halt the Contadora process, as we see in the report of the Secretary-General. The revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America is the result of a process of intensive consultations and a broad exchange of views with all the Central American Governments and reflects the efforts to integrate the various contributions and to reconcile those aspects on which divergencies remain. Yet, after the announcement by Nicaragua that

the Act is acceptable to the Sandinist Government, we hear that the aggressor is not yet ready for peace.

280. The chronological record of aggression against Nicaragua is gaining in volume. The provisional Order of the International Court of Justice, dated 10 May 1984, with regard to the mining of Nicaraguan ports, the resolutions of the United Nations and world public opinion seem to have no effect whatsoever on the policies of the United States authorities, who have turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to the rest of the world. They feel unhappy even when they hear their Western allies discuss token economic assistance for the region. Therefore day by day we see new dimensions of aggression. The CIA manual entitled "Psychological operations in guerrilla warfare" [A/39/596, annex], which clearly gives instructions to counter-revolutionary agents in Nicaragua for assassination of political figures, is another example of how the mythical super-Power of our time is confronting a small country of 3 million people who want to be independent and free from outside intervention and to bring social justice to their own society.

281. Nicaragua has wisely and openly welcomed the Contadora efforts for peaceful negotiations and is receptive to the Contadora Act and its Additional Protocol. Yet the United States Government is resisting this peace process, despite the opinion of its own people and contrary to the views of those who favour political rather than military solutions. The present Administration of the United States violates even the verdicts of its own Congress, which limited the CIA activities in Central America. However, the question remains unanswered why Central American affairs should be discussed and decided upon by the United States Congress.

282. The Muslim people of Iran, who have for more than a quarter of a century suffered from United States intervention, domination and influence in every aspect of life, can well appreciate the problems of Central America and the sufferings of the heroic people of Nicaragua.

283. The tragedy that has been taking place and is still going on in that part of the world is a manifestation of a real-life confrontation between a resolutely determined, valiant, aware and responsible but oppressed revolutionary nation of about 3 million, on the one hand, and, on the other, a gigantic, sophisticated, rich, technologically most advanced and intellectually best equipped, but oppressive and arrogant Power which cannot tolerate a breath of independence in any nation. This arrogant Power has selfishly and arbitrarily decided that others must remain American puppets, pay tribute to "made-in-U.S.A." democracies, and complement transnational corporations, or else they have to look over their shoulders because international arrogance can always use some neighbouring régimes in order to break down or at least tame the revolution.

284. In the face of this unequal, unjustified and absolutely unnecessary involvement and intervention on the part of the United States Government, Nicaragua has maintained the highest standard of morality in its defensive struggle. It has demonstrated the highest degree of political maturity, prudence and consistency of policies, sagacity and wisdom. Without forgoing any of its revolutionary principles, the Government of Nicaragua has been most receptive to peaceful means while it remains

resolute in its determination to defend the revolution. It has been most flexible without negotiating on its revolutionary positions. That is how a revolutionary nation acts. We commend them for all these admirable qualities and we fully support them. We support their struggle.

285. We also support the draft resolutions A/39/L.6 and L.7/Rev.1. We appeal to all parties concerned to subscribe to the Contadora Act, and finally, sincerely and humbly we appeal to the respective party to end its unpopular immoral policies all over the world and particularly in its backyard. Let us pray that American arrogance, by the grace of God, may be replaced with wisdom.

286. Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): Despite the strife and violence affecting Central America, we have recently witnessed promising initiatives aimed at facilitating political dialogue. It is incumbent upon all of us, and particularly upon those directly involved, to promote political solutions to the turmoil from which Central America has already been suffering for too long. The escalation of violence offers no true hope to the peoples of the region. The path to peace is through dialogue.

287. After a 20-month negotiating effort, the four Contadora countries—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—recently proposed a draft peace Act to the five Central American States. The treaty would bar outside intervention in the area or any support for insurgent forces, while providing for free elections and other democratic reforms. The draft Act affirms the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the rejection of the threat or use of force, the export of terrorism or subversion, support for democratic institutions and promotion of social justice. We realize that there are still outstanding problems, but we hope that these problems can be settled in a way which will make it possible to reach agreement on a stable and durable solution acceptable to all parties concerned.

288. My Government has welcomed and expressed its strong support for the efforts of the Contadora Group. We believe the Contadora process provides the best hope for an end to violence and for the restoration of co-operation among the neighbouring Central American States. We fully endorse this attempt to find regional solutions to regional problems.

289. In line with the views expressed in the Contadora Act, social change and economic progress are fundamental to peace in Central America. The meeting at San José on 28 and 29 September between the Foreign Ministers from Western European, Central American and the Contadora countries reflects, in our view, the growing and positive interest in finding alternative ways out of the regional conflict by addressing social and economic problems. Over the past few years my country has also strengthened its social and economic co-operation with Central America.

290. My delegation would also like to offer some comments on other positive developments towards a stabilization of the situation in the region.

291. We welcome the dialogue between Nicaragua and the United States of America initiated earlier this year. We also welcome the encouraging talks which took place at La Palma, on 15 October, following the invitation extended by President Duarte in his address to the General Assembly [24th

meeting]. The mere fact that the talks have taken place represents a step in the right direction.

292. It has also been encouraging to observe that democratic reforms are now under way in several Central American countries. These developments should be welcomed in the hope that they will continue and that they will be strengthened. The only peaceful solution to internal problems is national reconciliation, beginning with free and democratic elections.

293. The upheavals in Central America are still causing a flood of refugees. As of today, it is estimated that more than 350,000 refugees are hosted by various countries in the region. In this connection I should like to pay tribute to UNHCR, which is currently providing assistance to more than 100,000 refugees, and I should also like to extend this tribute to other international and non-governmental organizations active in this field.

294. In concluding, allow me to express my sincere hope that the process towards peace and reconciliation in Central America will be successful, eventually leading to social progress and political stabilization in this sensitive and important region of the world.

Mr. Lusaka (Zambia) resumed the Chair.

295. Mr. MUÑIZ (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The subject of today's debate, the situation in Central America, is of special importance to Argentina not only because of the implications that exacerbation of the conflict could have for peace and security in the region, but because the ties between my people and the Central American peoples are very strong and result from history, blood, language and traditions.

296. We are aware that the problems besetting Central America are highly complex and do not lend themselves to easy solutions. They are based on anachronistic social and economic structures which must be modified.

297. Backwardness, illiteracy, social injustice and stagnation of the economies, often for reasons alien to the region itself, such as the deterioration of the terms of trade, high interest rates and the protectionism practised by the developed nations, have all combined to make the situation in Central America today critical. If we wish to achieve peace, it is essential that we find ways to meet the legitimate aspirations of the peoples to economic and moral progress.

298. However, with regard to the complexity of the problem, we must understand that the conditions which have made the present crisis so serious have been gestating for decades. Throughout Central American history there has been direct or indirect intervention by the great Powers in the affairs of the nations of the region.

299. Therein lies one of the most valuable aspects of the initiative taken by the countries of the Contadora Group to solve the problem. Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, with the backing of the other Latin American nations, are proving that a regional approach is the most appropriate way of finding the solution to the problem. No one is better able to understand the problems of Latin America than the Latin Americans. No one shares the problems and the anxieties of Central America to a greater extent than the sister republics of Latin America, especially the four members of the Contadora Group.

300. Thus I should like to quote from the statement made by President Raúl Alfonsín in the meeting of the Group of Latin American States on 25 September this year, when he said: "A solution imposed from outside our region will not be a just and lasting solution. Peace and justice must be restored in Central America above all by the Central Americans themselves, with the co-operation of the other sister republics."

301. Argentina reiterates its total support for the Contadora proposal. The results of less than two years of efforts show that political will and understanding are tools that can produce results in the settlement of international conflicts.

302. The intensive, fruitful work of the Contadora Group has resulted in a set of international provisions assembled in the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/362, annex]. This document, submitted for signature by the parties concerned, constitute the most viable comprehensive solution to the problems of the area. We trust that the process of negotiations on the texts will culminate speedily in their signature.

303. Geography and history have made the Latin American nations neighbours, and peaceful coexistence is imperative if they are to develop harmoniously.

304. Argentina is ready to co-operate in order to achieve a just and peaceful solution of the Central American crisis, and we appeal to the entire international community, particularly those countries that have interests in the region, to act similarly.

305. It is essential that in the solution of the Central American crisis we bear in mind the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, to which the five Central American States are parties. We advocate full respect for the principles of non-intervention, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, the non-use of force or the threat of the use of force in international relations, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all peoples, and ideological pluralism, which is the logical corollary of the right of peoples to self-determination.

306. All these elements are clearly reflected in the proposals of the Contadora Group. The strict compliance with these principles by all States is the best guarantee of peace and well-being for the peoples.

307. The Argentine Republic is united with the countries of Central America by close ties of friendship—indeed, of fraternity, strengthened by recent proof of solidarity. It fervently hopes that peace and harmony among their peoples and increasing development will become a permanent and promising reality for all of them.

308. Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria): The continued volatile situation in Central America is a great disappointment to my delegation, considering the commendable efforts which have been made to settle it, particularly by the member States of the Contadora Group.

309. In adopting resolution 38/10 last year, the General Assembly expressed its firmest support for the Contadora Group and urged it to persevere in its efforts, which enjoy the effective support of the international community and the forthright co-operation of the interested countries in or outside the region. Since that resolution was adopted, Nigeria has followed with great interest the exertions of the

Contadora Group, in close consultation with the Central American countries, to work out a lasting solution to the problems of the region.

310. The report of the Secretary-General gives a clear account of the developments in the last year. Notwithstanding the uncertainties arising from the continued accusations concerning acts of aggression, sabotage and subversion, as well as the continued presence of foreign military forces, the cause of peace has been well served by the adroit statesmanship which resulted in the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. In the view of my delegation the draft Act provides a solid basis for internal peace and orderly development in the individual States in the region as well as mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which must be the foundation for regional security and stability. It behoves the international community, therefore, to encourage all the countries in Central America to consolidate the peace process by taking urgently the steps necessary to bring the Contadora Act into force.

311. In this connection we have noted in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report the affirmation by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group that the revised version of the Act was the result of a process of intensive consultations and a broad exchange of views with all the Central American Governments and reflected an effort to integrate the various contributions and reconcile those aspects on which divergencies remained.

312. It is in the interests of all concerned that the momentum created by the draft Act be maintained. In this connection the Central American countries, we believe, should bear in mind a very pertinent observation in the joint communiqué of the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group at the conclusion of their meeting at Madrid on 17 October 1984. The Foreign Ministers observed that "the essence of any negotiation required each side to yield to some extent, in the interests of a higher purpose, and . . . that the Contadora Act would have to reconcile the positions and the interests of the five countries directly involved" [see A/39/604, annex, p. 3]. Insistence on absolute cast-iron guarantees may only delay the process of peacemaking. We hope, therefore, that countries directly concerned will bear this very pertinent observation of the peacemakers in mind.

313. Several analyses of the problems of Central America have, of course, been made. We have heard quite a lot of them in the last two days. There seems to be a consensus, however, that whatever other complications have compounded the situation, the root cause is to be found in deep-seated socio-economic issues. It is clear, therefore, that unless these issues are addressed, no lasting solution can be expected. There seems to be consensus also that the situation, as it presently exists, poses a threat to international peace and security and is a great hindrance to regional stability. The continued introduction of more weapons and outside military personnel into the region can only serve to further inflame, rather than to ameliorate, the situation. Exertion of undue pressure and attempts at destabilization through sabotage or assassination can only strengthen the resolve of peoples who are determined to preserve their right to an independent choice of a system of government that will serve their best interests. To interpret such a legitimate quest in

ideological terms is to misjudge the situation. In this connection, my delegation hopes that all concerned will take seriously the views expressed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and heads of delegation of the non-aligned countries in their communiqué issued at the end of their meeting in October [A/39/560, annex], especially as it concerns non-interference in the internal affairs of countries of the region, as well as respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

314. In conclusion, may I reiterate my delegation's view that the Contadora process provides the best way to peace in the region. We therefore hope that it will be concluded with minimum delay.

315. Mr. DAZA (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The features of the present debate on the agenda item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives", and the statements made by virtually all Members of the Organization, are a clear indication of the importance which the international community attaches to the events taking place in that region. The violence that was unleashed there has not only extended its adverse consequences to the peoples of Central America but become a serious threat to peace and security in the region.

316. My country has watched these events very closely. There has existed between Chile and the Central American nations, despite the distance between us, a long and traditional association of peoples which makes us appreciate in all their intensity the problems and sorrows suffered by those nations. We have a historic friendship of which we are proud.

317. In his report [A/39/562] the Secretary-General put before the Assembly a very objective narration of the persistence of certain serious problems, as well as the success that has been achieved in the search for peace in the region.

318. We cannot set aside or ignore the problems, but if we look back in time and consider the view that was held two years ago, we do note progress which gives us confidence for the future. Among the successes we must stress the consolidation of the institutions of Honduras and the progress in that area achieved in Guatemala and El Salvador, and also the very important reconciliation that has occurred domestically in those countries. Without foreign influence, each of them has resorted to its own cultural roots, has faced its own realities and the needs of its own people and has made substantive progress in its institutional order. That progress guarantees that the life of those countries could be channelled harmoniously to overcome violence and the rifts that now exist, thereby turning their national potential towards the search for a better future.

319. We believe that the process of institutionalization of El Salvador warrants special mention, not only because of its political significance, but because of the courage shown by the people of El Salvador, whose electoral process was an expression of their desire for peace and their final rejection of violence and foreign ideologies that have tried to disrupt the coexistence of the people of the country.

320. May I refer now to the efforts being made by the Contadora Group for a peaceful settlement through dialogue of the problems afflicting the Central American region. Consistent with the traditional policy of my Government to support peaceful

procedures for the settlement of international disputes, we have attributed the greatest importance to the process of consultations and negotiations under the auspices of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

321. The draft of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America is a source of hope and satisfaction to my delegation. We have listened with careful attention to the speakers from the Central American countries that have preceded us, and we have likewise carefully studied the documents distributed by those representatives which contain the positions of their respective Governments with regard to the draft Act. We note that although all share the philosophy underlying the document, there are still differences regarding certain matters, particularly those touching on the systems of verification and control of the fulfilment of stipulated obligations and commitments.

322. My delegation would like to stress its trust that the Contadora spirit, which made possible a draft Act on whose foundations we all agree, will project into the future an attitude that will allow existing differences to be reconciled.

323. The debate on the situation in Central America at this session of the General Assembly reveals the existence of broad agreement to acknowledge the efforts of the Contadora Group as the most realistic and important made to find a peaceful solution to the regional conflict. My country shares in that feeling, and it is for that very reason that we shall support any draft resolution that strengthens the process, such as draft resolution A/39/L.6, sponsored by Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

324. Mr. FERM (Sweden): The conflict in Central America has for several years now attracted the attention of the world and has been a cause of concern to the Members of the Organization. What we are witnessing in Central America is a drama that has political, social and humanitarian dimensions, and one that could lead to wider conflicts. Fundamental issues are at stake which have direct bearing on the main principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

325. When analysing the conflict, the perspective from which one starts is fundamental. Depending on that perspective, one can arrive at different conclusions and different recommendations. The mistaken perspective leads to wrong conclusions. Is it a conflict between good democrats and evil totalitarians? Are the roots of the conflict to be found in the East-West competition?

326. My Government believes that the conflicts have their origin in the social, economic and political conditions in Central America itself—problems that often go back more than a century.

327. It is often said by Central Americans themselves that Central American countries must not become the tools in a struggle of interests and ideologies of foreign Powers. The Government of Sweden fully agrees with this view. The interests of the Central American people can be defined only by the Central Americans themselves. Any solution has to be based on the social and political realities of Central America and on the efforts of the people in the area.

328. It would be a serious mistake to attribute this conflict to a competition between the two major Powers. If this perspective is applied, regional ten-

sions and conflicts might be seriously aggravated. My Government has from the outset held the view that the conflicts of Central America must be settled by political, not military, means. The territorial integrity of the States in the region must be respected. All deliveries of weapons, all arms traffic and all military assistance to and within the region must cease in order to achieve a settlement. The peoples of Central America must be allowed to build their societies in peace and freedom without interference from the outside.

329. These principles have been guiding the Contadora Group and are clearly reflected in the recently presented revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. The efforts of the Contadora Group constitute a political and diplomatic achievement of great significance. The four countries of the Group have shown patience and skill in their negotiations over the past few years. It can beyond doubt be stated that their efforts have contained the conflicts in the region. This has been a service to international peace.

330. The five Central American countries also deserve praise for their willingness to work on a comprehensive settlement and for their flexibility, which have made it possible for the Contadora Group to present the Act for signature. My Government welcomes the fact that the Central American Governments have expressed their readiness to sign the Contadora Act as soon as possible and notes that Nicaragua has agreed to sign it without amendments.

331. This important political document should provide a sound basis for reducing military tension and the level of armaments in Central America. The Contadora Act also establishes basic guidelines for development towards democracy, for respect for human rights and for better economic and social conditions in Central America. It covers all aspects of the conflicts in the region. It should be possible for all the interests of the States concerned to meet within the context of the Contadora initiative. The Act could lay the foundation for a real *Pax Centroamericana*. The work behind this Act clearly demonstrates that the regional approach is feasible and desirable.

332. My Government urges the Governments of Central America to accelerate their consultations with the Contadora Group with the aim of obtaining an early signing of the Act. It is my Government's fervent hope that all other parties with primary interests in this region, especially the United States and Cuba, will endorse this process without altering the basic elements and principles of the Act.

333. The fundamental principles of international law, as embodied in the Charter, must be the common guidelines for relations among all States, large or small. All nations have equal rights and equal duties. There is no excuse and no justification, under any circumstances, for one nation to violate the independence or the territorial integrity of any other sovereign State. Therefore, my Government has reacted strongly against such acts as the mining of the ports and territorial waters of Nicaragua.

334. The respect for international law and the right of all nations to develop their own society without outside interference are fundamental to the settlement of the conflicts in Central America. However, as long as democratic rights are denied, human rights not fully respected and economic injustices prevail, there is ground for tension and violence.

335. My Government has noted with great satisfaction that the issues of human rights, social justice and economic development take a prominent place in the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. It is of utmost importance to assure an increased respect for human rights in an area where people have suffered so much. A better protection of civil and political rights would open the way for the badly needed enhancement of the economic and social conditions of the peoples of Central America.

336. Last year the General Assembly noted with satisfaction the measures taken in Central America for the establishment and improvement of democratic representations and pluralistic systems. The forthcoming elections in Nicaragua are a step in this direction, in the spirit of the Contadora process. It is important that all legitimate political forces in Nicaragua be able to take part in the political process under equal conditions. My Government believes that a dialogue between the Government and the political opposition in Nicaragua would be facilitated if the externally supported aggression against Nicaragua were terminated. We urge all parties concerned to pursue policies to promote this goal.

337. The United States has a great and undeniable influence in the region and, consequently, a special responsibility to contribute to peaceful development. The Swedish Government believes that this influence should be used to promote the signing and implementation of the Contadora Act. In this context, we join in welcoming the fact that bilateral discussions between the United States and Nicaragua have entered into a substantive phase.

338. The establishment of the Border Commission between Costa Rica and Nicaragua is a direct result of the Contadora process. My Government welcomes the recent talks between President Duarte of El Salvador and leaders of the FDR and the FMLN in response to the repeated appeals by this Assembly. Those talks are hopeful and welcome signs of progress in the spirit of the Contadora initiative. Sweden has long held the view that a lasting negotiated settlement in El Salvador is not possible without the participation of the FMLN-FDR. We encourage the parties to continue the talks until they achieve a comprehensive negotiated political settlement.

339. My Government believes that the Secretary-General's involvement in and support for the Contadora process is valuable and represents an important contribution to that process. His report is itself a clear expression of his strong commitment. My Government has also highly appreciated the support of the member countries of the European Economic Community and Portugal and Spain, as is shown in the joint communiqué of 28 September from San José [A/39/539, annex].

340. After decades of violence and human suffering in Central America, the Swedish Government hopes that decisive steps towards peace have now been taken. The Contadora Act deserves the whole-hearted support of the international community. My Government sincerely appeals to all those directly or indirectly concerned to show restraint—military and verbal restraint—to facilitate the attainment of peace in the region.

341. Mr. URBINA (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): For the second consecutive year the Assembly is dealing with the situation in Central

America, the threats to international peace and security and the peace initiatives in the region. This debate is the consequence of a very profound political, economic and social crisis the military manifestations of which are afflicting our peoples beyond the injustice and oppression that have been written into the history of Central America.

342. The peoples of Central America saw with horror how our deficiencies and underdevelopment fermented to the benefit of foreign interests that added to our calamities the tensions arising from the East-West confrontation.

343. Costa Rica has stated in the Assembly many times that we have followed a unique national evolution. For 150 years of independent life we have devoted our best efforts to building a nation based on work, justice and freedom. The highest achievement of our evolution is the Costa Ricans' well-developed will for dialogue. We learned to bridge our differences through dialogue and respect for the rights of others. We have taken as the tenet of our national life the phrase of that great American, Benito Juárez: "Peace is respect for the rights of others."

344. In the face of the crisis afflicting the peoples of Central America, Costa Rica has contributed its unshakeable will for dialogue. In the face of differences between our people and the Government of Nicaragua, we have proposed, with the acceptance of the Nicaraguan Government, the creation of a joint commission to deal with our differences. We have also proposed the creation of a commission for prevention and verification in order to reduce tensions on our common border. Both suggestions have enjoyed the Contadora Group's support. We went to France to hold talks with Nicaragua under the generous auspices of the French Government. We have not missed a single call for frank dialogue so as to achieve peace. We have given our all to the Contadora peacemaking process. This is the only position we could adopt to be consistent with the ideals and policies of those who preceded us in building the Costa Rican person.

345. From the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America² to the present day we have worked tirelessly and shoulder to shoulder with all Central Americans and the Contadora Group to find a negotiated solution to the crisis in Central America. We could not have done otherwise. Costa Rica is not an economic Power, nor can it be one. Costa Rica is not a military Power, nor does it wish to be one. Our sole strength is the moral strength of one who works daily and honestly for progress, justice and the freedom of our people.

346. Our will and that of our brothers is reflected in the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, which for many reasons is a novel approach. Never before had a regional crisis been broken down into its political, economic, social and military aspects. Never before has a solution been sought for each of these aspects within an overall perspective aimed at strengthening the common destiny. It is also a novel approach because of the verification and control measures for which it provides—measures that set aside narrow and worn-out concepts of national sovereignty. It is a novel approach because it is intended not only to put an end to the tensions and contradictions among Central Americans through a comprehensive agreement, but also to encourage a plan for the economic

political and social development of all the countries of the region.

347. Much has been achieved in the regional initiative for peace and co-operation. However, the international community is showing impatience. The anguished voices of the Central American peoples that are suffering the rigours of this crisis have been raised.

348. The international community cannot be denied fulfilment of its hopes, nor can the peoples of Central America be deceived about their needs. The draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America should, however, still be improved. No effort should be spared to make that Act an effective guarantee that peace, justice and progress may reign at last in our countries.

349. While one party is hesitating to sign the revised version of the document, it pretends not to know that Costa Rica is already fulfilling the overwhelming majority of the commitments contained in the Act.

350. Although at present we have no difficulty in complying with the letter and the spirit of the revised version, what is causing us concern is that a document weak in verification and control machinery might be subscribed to. We are also concerned that a faulty schedule for the entry into force of the measures envisaged in the Act may render the comprehensive agreement a dead letter.

351. We Costa Ricans want to be sure that the commitments assumed by States by signing the Act will in fact be complied with. We believe that all Central Americans deserve that security. No one in this Hall should be surprised at our legitimate concern over the verification of fulfilment of commitments contained in the Act. We have an adage at home which says: "A man who pays his debts does not fear for his collateral."

352. We are concerned at the schedule for entry into force of the commitments, because we Costa Ricans want the regional plan to be fulfilled in every aspect. We would be misleading the international community and deceiving the peoples of Central America were we to accept a plan the imperfect machinery of which would doom it to becoming a dead letter. We would have lost all sense of justice and equity were we to claim that we would put into force only those commitments that were required of us by our signing the Act and would not concern ourselves with the fate of the equally important aspects that must still be negotiated after the document is signed.

353. We are convinced that a negotiated solution to the conflicts of Central America presupposes necessary obligations that are verifiable, mutual and simultaneous. We emphatically reject the argument of those who claim that our concerns over the achievement of an effective and complete commitment are mere delaying tactics. Those who would disguise our concerns in interventionist and militaristic clothing are misguided.

354. Our concern is legitimate. Costa Rica is the State in Central America that has achieved the highest degree of social, political and institutional development. Thus, it is we that have most to lose in Central America.

355. It is totally legitimate, and we are sure that the majority of States represented in this Hall so see it, that a country that unilaterally disarmed 35 years ago

should be concerned about the reckless arms race in some countries of the region.

356. Our concern for national reconciliation is equally legitimate. As a result of the internecine wars in certain States of the region, we in Costa Rica have to bear a heavy burden of refugees. As a result of the fratricidal war raging in the neighbouring territory of Nicaragua we in Costa Rica are suffering from attempts to use our territory by one side and assaults on our territorial integrity by the other. It is for this reason that we are concerned for national reconciliation.

357. Our concern for democratization is also legitimate. We are convinced that only when all can participate in guiding the national destiny, with all the necessary political guarantees and freedoms, will there be peace. Elections do not make democracy. It is in democratic societies in which all the people participate that the people through their elections can express themselves. Then and only then is power legitimate; then and only then is peace the result of a national consensus.

358. Since the item on Central America was first proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly we have expressed our concern over the possibility that the United Nations might weaken the Contadora Latin American initiative. If, as appears possible, the Assembly adopts a resolution which gives precedence to a single aspect of a complex crisis, our fears will have been well founded.

359. When the United Nations was born its founders understood and strengthened the role of regional organizations and initiatives. Forty years later the Assembly is on the verge of denying the value of those regional efforts; it is also about to forget the regional approach, analysing the Central American crisis from a universalist standpoint. The saddest and most tragic feature of the Central American crisis is thus highlighted, namely, the East-West confrontation.

360. The East-West confrontation does not explain the crisis in Central America, but it is an important feature, an element of our misfortunes. The existence of a second draft resolution, different from that sponsored by the Contadora Group, implies that there is a strong East-West component which also characterizes the Central American crisis.

361. All the Contadora peace-making efforts and the best will of the Central American States were aimed at taking that Central American crisis out of the bipolar confrontation. We, the nine Governments participating in the Contadora process, understand that to the extent that our differences are allowed to fall within the context of the confrontation between the two great blocs, to that extent they will become insoluble.

362. We believe that the task that the international community has entrusted to the Contadora Group should be completed by the adoption by consensus of the draft resolution submitted by the four countries of that Group for consideration by the Assembly [A/39/L.6]. We are extremely apprehensive that such action could be hindered by considerations which some may consider legitimate but which none can deny make up only one part of the complex scenario of the Central American crisis. We are concerned about the effect on Central American Governments, on the Contadora Group and on international public opinion if the General Assembly decision was in any

way ambiguous. What will be the headlines in tomorrow's newspapers? Will the unanimous support of the Assembly for the Contadora process be stressed? Or will they rather stress the fact that the General Assembly gave precedence to the interests of one of the parties to the conflict over the general interests of the region?

363. The question of bringing peace to Central America is a matter of deep concern to Costa Rica, but over and above that we are concerned about the future of our region. It was in that spirit that the President of Costa Rica, Don Luis Alberto Monge Alvarez, invited those who came to the ministerial meeting at San José on 28 and 29 September last. There a plan for international co-operation was drawn up by the members of the European Economic Community, Spain, Portugal and the countries of Central America, in order to ensure that the Contadora effort would receive the support necessary for the achievement of its noble objectives. The presence of the EEC in our land and the conviction that the countries of the region have a common future are evidence of the need to place the general interest above the national interest of the parties.

364. The ultimate object of this debate, the ultimate object of the efforts of the Contadora Group, is the future of all Central American people. We therefore ask the Assembly to put the general interest of the Central Americans and the peace process undertaken by the Contadora Group above any individual interest.

365. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 I now call on the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

366. Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): The facts about the situation in Central America have been more than adequately presented to the Assembly. The facts about the interference and intervention of the Washington Administration in national, domestic and inter-State relations in Central America are very well known thanks to the detailed factual reports we have heard in this debate and the reports we watch on television and read in newspapers. We have also had them straight from the horse's mouth, since those facts have been revealed by official sources in the Washington Administration.

367. One year ago today the great super-Power, the United States of America, deployed its military might to topple the legitimate Government of Grenada. The aim was and remains the launching of a campaign of intimidation—the big-stick policy—and the message to the peoples of the region, the Caribbean as well as Central America, was: do not displease the almighty in Washington, D.C.—or else.

368. I shall not mention the facts but will try to analyse them and the aims, and maybe the results.

369. The debate on the situation in Central America and the covert and overt interference and intervention in one way or another of the Reagan Administration can be considered as a sign of the international solidarity with the people of the United States in their cries of protest at and their condemnation against the policies and practices of their own Government. This debate is in support of the heroic peoples of Central America in their sincere endeavours, efforts and struggle in defence of their right to self-determination, in defence of their homes and of

their homeland and in defence of their right to sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence.

370. We here are voicing our demand for the unconditional and immediate cessation of military and paramilitary activities of the Washington Administration against the peoples of Central America and in particular the heroic people of Nicaragua, who have been and still are being threatened. The threats have developed further into concrete acts of aggression, for how else could one describe the mining of the territorial waters of Nicaragua? The Washington Administration may believe that the world still lives in the era of gunboat diplomacy or policies, policies more recently labelled "State terrorism". Washington may not wish to admit it, but the peoples of the region south of the Rio Grande are no longer the farm slaves of the fruit companies. The region is no longer the backyard of the United States and the "banana republics" are no longer easy to maintain. The peoples are already awake. They are organized and determined to attain and exercise their rights, by any and all means.

371. Nicaragua is not an "infected piece of meat". All of us here who support the people of Nicaragua are not "insects", despite what Mr. Curtin Winsor, Jr., of the United States believes. We are humans, and we do support the people of Nicaragua. If Washington is still infected with pre-Darwin theoreticians, so be it; but the protests of the people of the United States against their Government's policies give us comfort and reassurance.

372. Not only are the policies and dreams of the Washington Administration bringing disaster to Central America and the Middle East, but also they are a threat to international peace and security. An advance base has already been established on occupied Palestinian territory, where Judaeo-Nazis are in strategic alliance with their counterparts in Washington, D.C. Billions of United States dollars and thousands of tons of United States military hardware are stockpiled in the homeland of Christmas—the land of milk and honey, the land of peace that is our occupied Palestine.

373. Similar arrangements are being made to convert Central America into another advance base of United States military intervention. The instructions are to destabilize those countries and "let brother kill brother"; rejoice in the "fruits of mischief"; spark regional wars and deplete national resources so that those third-world—or rather "third class"—peoples will fail in their efforts to develop and their children will grow in ignorance and darkness and in a subhuman, if not an inhuman, habitat.

374. The Washington Administration is criminally involved in the activities against the peoples of Central America. Evidence of their criminal involvement in Nicaragua is abundant. The A-B-C of criminal involvement has just been released—a pocket-sized booklet—and Washington cannot and should not be permitted to go scot-free. "CIA" reads "Criminal Involvement of the Administration".

375. The Washington Administration, like Israel, treats with disrespect and contempt international opinion, the norms of international behaviour and even the International Court of Justice. The United Nations, the International Court of Justice and all international organs are not, and were not meant to serve as, instruments in the service of the Washing-

ton Administration. These institutions were established by the peoples of the world for noble purposes. The Charter of the United Nations is clear. So is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the peoples all over the world have taken cognizance of their rights.

376. The Washington Administration claims that the Sandinists departed from their early promise of rebuilding Nicaraguan society on a pluralistic and democratic basis. We wonder, since when has the Washington Administration been assigned the task of ensuring that all Governments and all parties carry out their promises? Who bestowed those powers on the Washington Administration? The people of Nicaragua and only the people of Nicaragua—and I repeat, only the people of Nicaragua—have the right to elect and to question the behaviour of their Government. It is this right of election and the establishment of a free democratic society that the Nicaraguans are invited to exercise in a few days' time, on 4 November—so please let them do it in peace. Or is the Washington Administration conscious and cognizant that the Nicaraguan people will consolidate their support for those who liberated them from Somoza and the like, for those who give them hope, and more than mere hope, for a better future?

377. If anything it is the United States Government that has failed to honour its commitment to respect and ensure respect for international conventions. Need I refer to its concrete and unconditional support for Israel, an occupying Power, and Israel's persistence in violating the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949? How much respect and interest does the Washington Administration show towards the provisions of United Nations resolutions—resolutions supported by the United States itself—concerning the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, or concerning safeguards of the fundamental rights of the Palestinians? The United States Administration should be the last to pontificate.

378. The countries most directly involved and concerned, the Contadora Group, have formulated ways and means to ensure peace and development as well as non-interference and non-intervention. We appreciate the endeavours of the members of the Contadora Group. We commend the positive response of Nicaragua in signing the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. We regret that this positive response is not mentioned in the draft resolutions. We wish the Contadora Group success in its efforts and hope that all the other parties will do the same as Nicaragua. We equally appreciate the concern of the members of the EEC, a concern that confirms the international dimension of the situation in Central America. It is a situation which is not exclusively regional, or parochial, or feudal, and the international community, in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, including the United States of America, are under an obligation to help in the peace-making process and not to obstruct it, as the Government of the United States has decided to do, in the endeavours to convene a peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

379. In conclusion, the Palestinian people, through its representative the Palestine Liberation Organization, joins in the demand: hands off Central America!

Hands off Nicaragua! We wish to assure our brothers in Nicaragua—*No Pasarán!*

380. The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

381. Ms. GROOMS (United States of America): The United States would have preferred not to speak at all tonight. The hour is too late and we are too tired, but there has been an extraordinary distortion of our history, our policies and our practices by the representative of Iran.

382. The United States is a Government of laws. We freely submit ourselves to our laws, our courts, our legislators and our populations. We could hope for nothing better for the people of Iran than that they be permitted the same freedoms.

383. As our statement earlier this afternoon described, the United States support for diplomatic efforts to achieve an effective and lasting peace in Central America has been strong, consistent and continuous. Contrary to what the representative of Iran has told the Assembly, we have, within the framework of the Contadora process, engaged in a series of high-level bilateral discussions with the Government of Nicaragua. That process goes on. Most representatives who have spoken in these two full days of debate on this important question have spoken of the serious and root causes of the conflict in Central America, but the representative of Iran has laid all the blame on the doorstep of my country. Few will accept that version of history, especially coming from a régime which has violently denied its own citizens the most basic human rights, which has often been in violation of international law and which has sought to sponsor terrorist acts all over the world.

384. The representative of Iran is fond of quoting Scripture. I would like members in this Hall to hear a passage of scripture from the Christian tradition, and I quote Matthew 12:37: "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." I leave it to the judgement of this body whether the representative of Iran has condemned or justified his Government and his position with the words he has expressed here today about my Government.

385. Mr. MONCADA ZAPATA (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The United States representative is continuing in this body the dirty war of the Reagan Administration against Nicaragua. He has started an offensive of calumny and insults because false accusations and military aggression are all the United States offers to Nicaragua. The United States representative complains of the militarization of Nicaragua. We are only trying to defend ourselves against the most powerful country on Earth, which spends \$350 billion a year on the military.

386. Surely they are concerned by the fact that repeating the invasion of Grenada in Nicaragua is far more expensive.

387. How can the representative of a country that for 45 years supported and maintained the Somoza dictatorship speak of democracy? The representative of the United States, heir to Fulgencio Batista's diplomacy, dared to say that the Sandinist Front is the same thing as the Somoza régime. We are satisfied to know that even they themselves do not believe in their view of history. If we were the same, doubtless, we too would have had the unconditional support of the Government of the United States.

388. If examples of totalitarianism are sought, they will be found among the gorillas that they have imposed on many countries and which they keep in power through terror and oppression—vampires that feed and become fat on the blood of the peoples.

389. How can they speak of threats to peace when one year ago they invaded the island of Grenada? How can they speak of human rights when they keep in power the torturers, the assassins, the death squadrons? How can those who speak of human rights be the best allies of the racist régime of South Africa, with which they have joined in a repugnant constructive engagement? How can the representative of the United States criticize us if we prepare to defend ourselves and our country from the country that finances and trains mercenaries for its war against Nicaragua, that has mined our ports, sabotaged our fuel reserves in the port of Corinto and endangered the lives of 30,000 inhabitants of the town; that prepared for mercenaries a manual for terrorist operations—of which, I presume, the representative of the United States is probably proud?

390. The representative of the United States should be taught to read *The New York Times*. It seems that his eyesight was clouded when he read the editorial page opinion relating to that criminal manual and the dirty war.

391. For the Government of the United States to criticize, it should first regain the moral authority that it has lost. Its leaders are already closer to despotism than to democracy and every day are getting closer to becoming genuine fascists.

392. The representative of the United States criticized our position regarding the Contadora process, trying to divert attention from the fact that it was that country's shameful pressure that prevented the culmination of the negotiating process. At this stage, Nicaragua is the last that can be accused of blocking the Contadora efforts, but there is much to be said in this respect about the United States. Some of our colleagues in the region can offer firsthand proof of that. For example, this afternoon we heard the representative of El Salvador, to whom we shall not reply because, personally, that representative is worthy of great respect and sincere appreciation. We know that he does not believe in what he was told to read out.

393. Mr. ZAMANI NIA (Islamic Republic of Iran): We heard the representative of the United States claim that the representative of Iran had distorted the facts. However, during the last two days we have all heard what the facts really are and the numerous representatives who spoke about the violations of international law by the United States, statements which, apparently, the representative of the United States did not hear. I would be more than pleased to show anyone interested that all the facts and figures included in the statement of the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran were drawn from United States publications. It would seem ridiculous for the representative of a Government that publishes a manual on assassinating political figures of other Governments to talk about human rights. I would like to reserve my right to make a full reply tomorrow.

394. Ms. GROOMS (United States of America): As members heard my delegation state earlier this afternoon, one of the common chants now heard in

the streets of Managua is, "*El Frente y Somoza son la misma cosa*". That was not always so.

395. In June 1979, the OAS, in an unprecedented move, recognized the coalition fighting against the repressive dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. To do this, the OAS had to withdraw its recognition of the still-ruling Somoza dictatorship as the legitimate Government of Nicaragua. The most persuasive argument for this move by the OAS was the coalition's promises to establish a pluralistic society with a mixed economy, to hold early elections, and to pursue a non-aligned foreign policy. In July 1979, the coalition which represented every major sector of Nicaraguan society—including organized labour, private business, and the Catholic Church—overthrew the dictatorship of Somoza. Many Nicaraguans and supporters of the revolution in other countries, including my own, had high hopes that the new Government would improve the lives of all the country's citizens.

396. The Sandinist Government, heir to the coalition, has violated these promises made to the OAS and to the Nicaraguan people because of the policies of the National Directorate of the Sandinist National Liberation Front. The Front's nine Marxist-Leninist revolutionary leaders, declaring themselves the "vanguard of the revolution", have imposed their programmes on the Government and people of Nicaragua. To consolidate their power, the Sandinists have established a pervasive security apparatus and auxiliary organizations. The resulting repression has caused tens of thousands of Nicaraguans to flee their homeland. In addition, some 10,000 Nicaraguans have taken up arms to resist the Sandinist dictatorship. Thus, five years after the revolution, we hear the refrain "*El Frente y Somoza son la misma cosa*".

397. Mr. ROSALES-RIVERA (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I had not intended to speak in exercise of my right of reply, but as the representative of Nicaragua used some offensive phrases I should like to reply to them.

398. He may be giving proof of the truth of the old saying that the burglar believes that everybody is a thief. Perhaps because he is given a series of orders and propositions that he must voice and cannot depart from, he has to act as a kind of puppet in delicate situations, situations that require consideration. We act after careful consideration and say what we believe at a given moment is relevant and will enlighten those who hear it.

399. If the representative of Nicaragua believes that another person's opinion is despicable and that no weight need be given to what is said here, that is his business and it does not disturb me. What does disturb me is the dictatorial and virtually anti-democratic way in which problems are dealt with and smoke-screens put up here and accusations are levelled at legitimate representatives of Governments and at the United Nations, a body whose purpose is to co-ordinate and bring together divergent views in the Assembly.

400. If what the representative of El Salvador said was not pleasing to the representative of Nicaragua, that is his affair, but we have always spoken truthfully and will continue to do so even though it may not please the representative of Nicaragua.

401. Mr. TÉLLEZ ARGÜELLO (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The representative of the United States mentioned a meeting of the OAS in

1979. I remind her that at that meeting the United States delegation suggested an invasion of Nicaragua. The trouble was that there was no chorus of support, as there had been on earlier occasions, as there had been for the invasion of the Dominican Republic. As for certain promises that we made to the OAS and to which the representative of the United States referred, it may be worthwhile to remind her that we committed ourselves solely to our people and to our 50,000 dead. Enough about that.

402. As for the representative of El Salvador, it must be very awkward for him to speak of puppets, because the General Assembly clearly understands who is the puppet and who has been the puppet, and even more difficult to speak of democracy, for we know who it is that exercises democracy in El Salvador.

403. Mr. ROSALES-RIVERA (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I find the feeble arguments of the representative of Nicaragua rather pathetic, because it seems that he does not understand the true meaning and content of democracy. He believes that democracy is merely a word. He does not believe that democracy means the coming together of political parties striving for power; he considers that democra-

cy is the imposition of the State apparatus from above to right and left without the minimum of decorum, justice or opportunity for the expression of political opposition. For all these reasons, perhaps it is better not to enter into a debate on what democracy is, because our concepts are completely different.

The meeting rose at 8.45 p.m.

NOTES

¹Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1983, document S/16041, annex.

²Ibid., Supplement for July, August and September 1983, document S/15877, annex.

³Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America), Provisional Measures, Order of 10 May 1984, I.C.J. Reports 1984, p. 169.

⁴See A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, para. 134.

⁵Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-ninth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1984.

⁶See A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. 1.

⁷United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.