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*President:* Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**Consideration of the grave situation in Tunisia  
obtaining since 19 July 1961 (*concluded*)**

1. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) (*translated from Spanish*): May I say that it is an honour for me to occupy this rostrum in a debate presided over by Mr. Boland of Ireland. Many words have been spoken here in his praise. We, for our part, know and esteem him, and when we voted for him as President of this special session, the third in the history of the General Assembly, we offered our tribute both to the man who presides over us and to the country he represents.

2. When my Government supported the request to call together this special session of the Assembly, it was by no means with the intention of increasing the gravity of the present serious and regrettable situation but in the hope of facilitating a settlement at which the Security Council was unable to arrive in its debates.

3. In this debate and on this occasion, we have not been allowed to hear the voice of the French delegation, whose influence is always so great. The facts, however, were laid before us in the statement of the representative of Tunisia, Mr. Slim [996th meeting]. The austerity of his statement, the circumstances in which he made it and its general tone have been praised many times from this rostrum, and I can only say that when I hear Mr. Slim, I always have the impression that I am listening to one of the eminent workers for human progress. I have had occasion to work with him in a Committee of the General Assembly, and I have seen him fight relentlessly for those fundamental rights which, according to the Charter, constitute all the dignity of the human person. Several of our colleagues have expressed their satisfaction and agreement with the way in which the representative of Tunisia has described the situation from this rostrum, and I also have the honour to convey to him, in a few words—and I shall be really brief—my Government's views on the situation at this special session of the United Nations General Assembly.

4. It is obvious that world opinion was deeply concerned when, on 21 July 1961, the Security Council

held its first meeting to discuss this question. The events at Bizerta, the victims of the attack and, above all, the fact that the Security Council was not able to achieve any positive settlement, tended to increase the gravity of this incident, which has taken on such dramatic proportions on the international stage.

5. Yet, when this special session of the General Assembly was requested, even the interim resolution approved by the Security Council<sup>1</sup> had not been fully carried out. It must be made clear that this was not the only occasion on which the Security Council had considered the same question, since it had done so on another occasion and from other points of view. In 1958 the Council received complaints which may shed some light on the path this affair was to take until it arrived at this session of the General Assembly, in which my Government trusts that it will be of assistance in helping the parties to arrive at a settlement and thus finally dispose of this dispute.

6. It is a historical fact that, under the Protocol of Agreement of 20 March 1956 between France and Tunisia, the independence of Tunisia was finally recognized and Tunisia entered the community of sovereign nations. Bizerta, however, continued to be a subject of debate. The agreement which was to have been reached—and here I quote from the original documents—"until circumstances allow of the conclusion of a final agreement", was never achieved; but, as we have heard several times from this rostrum, the very nature of these agreements—either of the provisional agreement or of the agreement which was to have been final—show what was the essential attitude of France, which did not consider that its troops should be stationed permanently at Bizerta.

7. All this suggests that direct negotiation, understanding between the parties and a dialogue between the two main actors in this drama are more than possible; my Government hopes that these talks will be resumed, and it will make every effort to bring this about. The resumption of these talks is necessary in the eyes of the world, and the solution of this dispute is still more necessary. It is essential to reach an agreement that will complete in this part of Africa the admirable system of independent and sovereign States now existing on the African continent. The resurrection of the peoples and nations of the colonial world ensures the presence in Africa of the universal values of our age.

8. I may say that I have recently seen, with my own humble eyes, many things to confirm the ideas and profound hopes of which I speak. These new nationalities, rising from the colonial world, seem once more to be uniting their destinies, at a time when the links created by the colonial system have been broken, to be

<sup>1</sup> Official Records of the Security Council, Sixteenth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1960, document S/4882.

replaced by new links between the peoples of Africa and the values of their own destiny and culture.

9. I may say that, as in Latin America in the nineteenth century, there has been a revival of peoples. The contribution of the new nationalities to human progress is becoming as obvious as their contribution to the United Nations.

10. This is why, when I myself take these considerations into account, and when I note that there has been a reference to the general lines which must be laid down before a final agreement can be reached, I must say more firmly than ever that, from the moment the possibility of this special session of the Assembly was considered, my Government has been ready to support, encourage or initiate any action provided that it would not increase present difficulties or give rise to any new judgements, that might be irrevocable, while the dialogue between the two factors is interrupted. Since our task is not to put new obstacles in the way of a solution, I must make it clear, on the instructions of my Government, that we are ready and anxious to co-operate in preparing general conditions which may lead to an understanding between the two parties to this incident. My Government's view on this debate and on the draft resolution to be voted upon in a moment [A/L.351], is that we must try to bring about a reconciliation between the parties, without taking premature decisions on questions of substance. To do so might create new obstacles to this reconciliation between the two nations, both of which we all respect and esteem equally. This is our view and this is how we shall vote.

11. We are not here to prejudge the matter but, fundamentally, to bring about a resumption of talks between these two nations, which have been suddenly divided by the events we are considering in this debate, and to enable them to co-operate for peace and for the right of peoples to decide their own destiny. I repeat that this is our view and this is how we shall vote.

12. There is no reason—quite on the contrary—why we should not vote in favour of that part of the draft resolution which reaffirms the Security Council's interim resolution and urges the Government of France to implement fully the provisions of operative paragraph 1 thereof.

13. We also intend to vote in favour of operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, which calls upon both Governments to enter into immediate negotiations for which, my Government, as I have often said, has striven so much. It is also the desire of my Government that these negotiations should be completed in full accordance with the principles of the Charter. The purpose of these negotiations should be to devise the agreed measures mentioned in that resolution and to create suitable circumstances for the ending of this state of affairs, and for the restoration of peace and of the guarantees and rights involved in this conflict.

14. Naturally our vote on the whole situation will be qualified by the explanation I have just given, in accordance with my Government's desire to bring about an understanding between the parties. Anything which departs from this purpose must necessarily create new difficulties in a situation which is already dangerous and which we all deplore.

15. In putting these views—and it is my honour to do so on behalf of my Government—I fervently hope that these negotiations, held in accordance with the principles of international law and the purposes of the

Charter, will lead to better relations between France and Tunisia, the two distinguished parties.

16. The PRESIDENT: A number of representatives have expressed a desire to explain their votes before the voting. I shall now call upon these in the order in which they are inscribed.

17. I should like to recall that their purpose in coming to the rostrum will be to explain the votes they propose to cast and the reasons for them. In view of the late hour, and what I believe is the general desire of the Assembly to reach a conclusion on this matter this evening, I would earnestly request the representatives concerned, who have expressed a desire to explain their votes, to confine their observations to that purpose.

18. Mr. BITSIOS (Greece) (*translated from French*): Mr. President, I would like first to take the opportunity of associating myself whole-heartedly with the delegations who have already expressed their esteem and respect on the occasion of your election to the presidency of this extraordinary session of the General Assembly.

19. Before we pass to a vote, I want to state my delegation's position very briefly with regard to the draft resolution [A/L.351] submitted to this Assembly by thirty-two of its Members.

20. The dispute which today divides two countries that have hitherto been friends and certain tragic aspects which it has taken on have aroused profound dismay in my country, the more so as Greece maintains cordial relations with them. We are bound to France by memories of our common struggle for the liberty of all peoples, as well as our determination to defend this supreme possession again if need be. As for Tunisia, in addition to the age-old bonds which unite the Hellenic people and the family of Arab nations, there is the fact that since Tunisia has been amongst us in this Organization our two delegations have on numerous occasions found themselves side by side on the same arduous road in defence of the principles of independence and dignity of peoples.

21. In this situation of shared friendship, it is not an easy task to define my delegation's position in the Franco-Tunisian dispute, the more so as the absence of the French delegation, which we deplore, has deprived us of the opportunity of hearing it defend its position in the debate.

22. If we look closely at the question before us we cannot but note—several speakers have already done so—that the key to the solution rests in the incontestable principle of Tunisia's sovereignty over Bizerta. This principle is essentially the one which, in the final analysis, constitutes the most solid basis for the negotiations which must ensue without further delay, and the best guarantee of their success. The solution to which Tunisia aspires must inevitably derive from that principle.

23. Secondly, we think that during these negotiations the parties concerned should define, in the light of the principle to which I have just referred and strictly within its limits, the practical measures which would lead to a definitive solution of the dispute. This is the sense in which my delegation interprets operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution.

24. It goes without saying that the only way to end this crisis is by carrying out the decision made by the Security Council<sup>2</sup> on 22 July promptly and fully. My

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

delegation will therefore vote in favour of the relevant paragraphs in the text before us if they are put to the vote separately.

25. Nevertheless, my delegation has reservations about the wording of the fourth preambular paragraph. It feels that, in view of the divergent interpretations given in the official texts, the circumstances in which the conflict broke out are not so clearly established that the Assembly can solemnly announce that such and such a party has committed such and such a violation. Besides, such an announcement would only serve to stir up feelings which have already weighed heavily enough on the unhappy events in Tunisia, and by so doing, block the rapid progress for which we all hope.

26. These considerations, which will determine our vote on the draft as a whole, were dictated by a solicitude for the true facts and by the desire to reach an exact diagnosis of what can be done.

27. Mr. AMADEO (Argentina) (*translated from Spanish*): The Argentine delegation has already put its views on the substance of the question before us in detail and, we trust, objectively [998th meeting]. May we now say a very few words in explanation of our vote on the draft resolution [A/L.351] which has been submitted to the judgement of the Assembly.

28. My delegation fervently hoped to be able to vote in favour of a draft resolution affirming Tunisia's right to demand the effective exercise of its sovereignty over Bizerta, urging France to carry out the interim resolution of the Security Council<sup>3</sup> strictly and immediately in accordance with their explicit right to do so.

29. It seemed to us that the logical corollary of this debate must be the approval of a text recognizing the justice of the Tunisian demand, in terms which would make the resolution a truly effective instrument for the peaceful settlement of this conflict. As the representatives of Tunisia and other countries know well, we had no lack of positive suggestions to offer to that end, which it has unfortunately been impossible to achieve.

30. Although we agree with a large part of the draft resolution of the African and Asian countries, we think that some of its paragraphs might have been drafted in a way more likely to lead to a peaceful settlement of the dispute. In particular we find the tone of the fourth preambular paragraph unnecessarily harsh, and the drafting of operative paragraph 3 is objectionable. With regard to the latter, although we are convinced that the natural conclusion of this conflict can only be the final evacuation of the base of Bizerta, we have serious doubts about the competence of the General Assembly to take the place of the parties by defining *a priori* the settlement which they must reach.

31. I think the General Assembly has rarely been more anxious to approve a draft resolution unanimously, and I also think it has rarely come closer to achieving this aim. We deeply regret that this has not been possible, because we are convinced that, if the General Assembly had decided on a just and unanimous text, this would have been more beneficial to all, especially to the country directly affected, than a text which is not completely free of polemical references; and we are not completely certain that this text will help towards a conciliation.

32. Lastly, although we regret that the document which will presumably be the result of this debate is not exactly what we should have preferred, my dele-

gation does not repent of supporting the request for the convening of this special session of the General Assembly, because the dispassionate voices inspired by a desire for concord and a love of truth which we have heard here, have risen far above the words inciting to rancour and hatred; and this in itself justifies our meetings.

33. Mr. ZOTTI (Italy): I would like to say just a few words to explain my delegation's vote on the draft resolution [A/L.351].

34. Italy appreciates the spirit which originated the draft resolution. We understand that the Security Council having failed to reach a decision during its last meeting [966th meeting], there would be a number of countries which felt it appropriate to ask for the convening of a special session of the Assembly. We certainly do not minimize the gravity of the situation which has arisen between France and Tunisia concerning the Bizerta crisis. Furthermore, Italy firmly believes in the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States, a principle which, of course, implies the acceptance of whatever steps a Member State deems necessary to undertake within the sphere of its sovereign rights, in accordance with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

35. In this sphere it is therefore obvious that no Government could be asked to keep foreign troops on its soil without its consent, embodied in an agreement. It is also an undeniable fact that there is a Security Council interim resolution<sup>4</sup> which is still awaiting full compliance.

36. The Italian people feel very close to the two nations involved in the dispute—our ally and friend, France, and Tunisia, a nation to which we feel bound by so many links. We deeply regret the serious sufferings that nationals of both countries have endured. In particular, Italy is fully aware of the hardship that this crisis has imposed on the Tunisian people, so justly proud of their recently attained independence. We hope that negotiations between the two parties can soon be resumed and brought to a happy conclusion.

37. Does this draft resolution make these negotiations easier? Here, we must confess, we have mixed feelings. I am afraid that the present draft, as it stands, is more likely to widen than help to bridge the gap between the two sides.

38. As a matter of fact, overtures were made by France. We also heard from Tunisia that it is willing to enter into negotiations. My Government has done its utmost, and will spare no effort, to bring the parties together so that negotiations can take place.

39. Bearing this in mind, it is our belief that the draft resolution before us, with all its good intentions, would not serve the purpose of favouring, at least in the short run, the opening of negotiations, which we deem highly desirable. We feel that both sides should negotiate as speedily as possible.

40. The principle which this draft resolution seeks to uphold seems to us to be correct. However, the way in which it is expressed makes it difficult for us to accept it.

41. Efforts were made to seek a wording which would have been, in our view, more appropriate to the task. We sincerely regret that there was no success in this respect, for it would have prompted us to support the draft resolution.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

42. Mr. DADET (Congo, Brazzaville) (*translated from French*): I shall be extremely brief. The delegation of the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), which has not yet formed the singular habit of insulting from this rostrum the flags and the national anthems of States Members of our Organization, will vote without the slightest regret for the draft resolution [A/L.351] before the General Assembly. In doing so, the delegation of the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) wishes to reaffirm and endorse the statements by the representatives of Senegal, Cameroun, Madagascar and the Niger, who spoke from this same rostrum on behalf of the States belonging to the Brazzaville group with wisdom, level-headedness and effectiveness, in words free from hatred, demagoguery and blustering competitiveness.

43. The delegation of the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), which feels repugnance for all Utopian dialectics, has no intention of following the contradictory example of those who, less than a year ago, were applauding a certain speech here in which the dismissal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations was requested and even demanded. It is a curious paradox that these same men are today heaping flowers at the Secretary-General's feet.

44. The delegation of the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), in voting unreservedly for this draft resolution, bows before the dead who fell at Bizerta and expresses its earnest wish that there shall be no renewal of this unhappy spectacle which has saddened the friends of the Tunisian and French peoples, among whom are to be included the peoples of the countries in the Brazzaville group. The delegation of the Congo (Brazzaville), as I have just announced, will therefore add its vote to that of those delegations which sincerely desire, in Africa and in the world, that human blood should cease to be shed unnecessarily, as is now the case in Algeria and above all in Angola where Mr. Salazar's Portugal is stopping at nothing to exterminate thousands of Africans. The delegation of the Congo (Brazzaville) will therefore vote for the whole of the draft resolution submitted.

45. Mr. THORS (Iceland): At this late hour, at the moment when the President's term of office is coming to a close, may I be allowed to congratulate him on the excellent service he has rendered the United Nations during the entire tenure of his presidency. He has presided over an extraordinary General Assembly, extraordinary both on account of the large attendance at the fifteenth session and by reason of the many unusual, grave, and difficult problems with which it was seized, which prolonged its duration beyond that of any previous session of the General Assembly. All these difficulties he has met with tact, clarity and determination. Therefore, I hope he will accept my sincere congratulations.

46. I have come to this rostrum to say a few words in explanation of the vote of the Icelandic delegation on the draft resolution [A/L.351] which will soon be put to the Assembly.

47. Let me first state that we were somewhat doubtful about the urgency of convening a special session of the Assembly to consider the situation in Tunisia, because of the fact that the sixteenth regular session of the Assembly is to be convened in less than a month. We also had doubts whether the Assembly, at a special session, could arrive at a positive and constructive conclusion that would be helpful in this regrettable

and grave situation, and that would lead to realistic negotiations between France and Tunisia, it being evident that negotiations between the parties themselves constitute the only road that can lead to a peaceful and enduring settlement of the dispute.

48. We are now faced with the hard fact of having to register our vote on a single draft resolution, to which no amendments have been offered. We should have preferred to see some of the paragraphs of the draft resolution amended—and I refer specifically to the second and fourth paragraphs of the preamble. We are, however, happy to note that the draft resolution as a whole has been drafted with prudence and moderation, avoiding ill-construed or malicious accusations.

49. It was no surprise to us that Tunisia's case was presented to the Assembly in a moderate and dignified manner by Tunisia's distinguished representative, Mr. Slim.

50. A small nation like mine is bound by virtue of its very existence to honour, emphasize and support in all instances the principle of self-determination and the sovereignty of every nation over its own territory. This vitally important principle of territorial integrity is clearly pronounced in paragraph 2 of the operative part of the draft resolution, which states that the General Assembly:

*"Recognizes the sovereign right of Tunisia to call for the withdrawal of all French armed forces present on its territory without its consent"*.

51. It is the sad truth that French armed forces are present in Tunisia against the will and wishes of the Tunisian Government and the Tunisian people, and not by reason or right based on any international or bilateral treaty or agreement. The Tunisian Government, in the exercise of its full sovereignty, therefore has the complete right to demand the withdrawal of these armed forces from Tunisian soil, since they are stationed there in violation of Tunisian sovereignty. We favour the statement contained in paragraph 2 of the operative part of the draft resolution.

52. In paragraph 3 the General Assembly:

*"Calls upon the Governments of France and Tunisia to enter into immediate negotiations to devise peaceful and agreed measures in accordance with the principles of the Charter for the withdrawal of all French armed forces from Tunisian territory"*.

It is for the parties to negotiate about the modalities and time-table as well as the necessary technical and precautionary measures in connexion with the withdrawal. But withdrawal seems to be the only solution, since this is claimed by Tunisia on the strength of its inherent territorial integrity. We adhere to this principle and must vote for it on the basis of our own conscience and in all fairness. If we did not jealously honour and guard the principle of self-determination and sovereignty based on law and justice, we should not be worthy of the name of a sovereign and independent nation.

53. We shall therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, well remembering that what we want others to do unto us, we should likewise do unto them.

54. Today it is Tunisia that calls for understanding and support. Tomorrow it may be any other small nation. We have enough confidence in the wisdom and fairness of France and Tunisia to be convinced that their dispute of today is but the prologue to their friendly relations of tomorrow and of all the years to come. Both nations have proven their greatness in the dim days of struggle and

sacrifice. They are both our friends and we wish them well.

55. What is of crucial importance to the Icelandic delegation in this case is the fear that if we do not strongly and universally protect and practise the principle of the territorial integrity of all nations everywhere, we shall invite the big and strong to thrust their powerful armies into the territories of the small and weak. That would be inviting disaster. Let us therefore be determined in pronouncing what is right, legal and just.

56. Mr. GALLIN-DOUATHE (Central African Republic) (*translated from French*): As part of the Brazzaville group, the representatives of Senegal and Cameroun have addressed to you, Mr. President, their respectful congratulations on your election to the presidency of this special session of the General Assembly. I should like to repeat those congratulations on behalf of my delegation, for in our view your election, or rather your re-election, is a unanimous tribute to your great qualities as an impartial and courteous diplomat.

57. The representatives of Senegal and Cameroun have set forth in clear and precise terms the position of the Brazzaville group with respect to the question of Bizerta, the cause of the Tunisian drama. My delegation will limit itself to a few general remarks, before participating in the vote which is to be taken in a few moments.

58. Firstly, my country, a free, independent and sovereign State, does not intend to receive a lesson from any country as regards our national or international policy. My country is a State whose national unity and political stability have earned the admiration even of its adversaries.

59. Secondly, the Central African Republic, a Member State of the United Nations, once again proclaims its complete faith in this institution, whose Charter it has freely accepted both in the letter and in the spirit. That is why my country means to use this important international rostrum to make its modest contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, that is to say, to wider fraternization in the world family. In short, the Central African Republic feels that this rostrum is a place where a Member State should seek to raise itself rather than to lower itself by insulting and slandering other Members, for the Central African Republic has as its motto: Unity, dignity, work. Furthermore, my country does not care for those who indulge in long palavers; it does not hate them, but it does not admire them.

60. These elementary principles having been stated, it is clear that my country's position regarding the Tunisian problem has been a position of conciliation. So soon as the painful news of the Franco-Tunisian conflict was received in my country, Mr. David Dacko, President of the Central African Republic and President of the Government, sent two messages, one to Tunis and the other to Paris. What did the message addressed to Tunis say? I shall read it to you very quickly:

"President Dacko to President Bourguiba of Tunisia:

"It is with infinite sadness that my Government and I have heard of the tragic events at the military base of Bizerta which have plunged Tunisia into mourning. We keenly deplore the loss of so many human lives suffered by your country, a friend of the Central African Republic, and we fully share your sorrow. We heartily wish for the immediate cessation of military operations and a return to peace with a view

to the peaceful negotiations which alone will lead to a solution of the Bizerta problem. With highest consideration. Dacko."

61. At the same time the President of the Central African Republic addressed a message to President de Gaulle, which was worded as follows:

"President Dacko to President de Gaulle:

"My Government and I have heard with amazement the announcement of the tragic events in Tunisia at the military base of Bizerta, that have already cost the lives of many hundreds of victims. We sincerely deplore this unnecessary loss of human life. We express the hope that France, always imbued with the ideal of peace and liberty, will do everything in its power to put a stop to the military operations in Tunisia without delay. We consider that a solution of the question of Bizerta can only be found through negotiation. To give up the idea of negotiation would be to compromise once again peace in Africa and particularly in the Franco-African community. With highest consideration. David Dacko."

62. This position taken by my Government was officially confirmed in a *communiqué* published after a meeting of the Council of Ministers, which stated among other things:

"The Government of the Central African Republic cannot but regret keenly the tragic events in Bizerta which set France and Tunisia—countries that are friends—against each other, and it deplores the unnecessary loss of human life which has resulted.

"Furthermore, recognizing that Tunisia, an independent country, has the right to exercise its sovereignty over the whole of its national territory, it approves the principle of the evacuation of the military base of Bizerta by French troops, as requested by the Tunisian Government.

"The Government of the Central African Republic hopes that an amicable settlement of the Bizerta affair will be reached as quickly as possible and recommends that the two parties concerned, rather than seek international settlement of the dispute or resort to the further use of force, should open direct negotiations without delay with a view to finding a reasonable settlement acceptable to both countries."

63. Later on, within the scope of the concerted international policy of the Brazzaville group of States, my country and my Government united their efforts to those of the other participants at the Conference of Abidjan, on 25 October 1960, to seek a conciliatory solution for the Tunisian problem. Let us recall the result of this meeting of the heads of State of the Brazzaville group: first, reaffirmation of the principle of absolute respect for the territorial integrity of every independent State; second, censure of recourse to violence in any form for the settlement of territorial claims; third, affirmation that a debate in the United Nations would only jeopardize the possible rapid solution of the Bizerta problem; and fourth, expression of the hope of the twelve States that direct negotiations would open immediately between France and Tunisia with a view to normalizing relations between the two countries and establishing a precise timetable for the evacuation of Bizerta by French troops.

64. It will also be remembered that a collective approach to the French Government was made by the heads of the twelve States of the Brazzaville group—to which my country belongs. In the meantime, the will of the majority of the States Members of the United Nations

led to the convening of a special session of the General Assembly [A/4831]. Thus we have come to consider this evening a draft resolution [A/L.351] submitted by a number of African-Asian States.

65. My delegation and the delegations of the Brazzaville group are happy to note that this draft resolution, above all in its operative part, reflects the whole solution which the Brazzaville group had advocated in its negotiations with Tunis and Paris. The main points are: full compliance with the interim resolution of the Security Council of 22 July;<sup>5</sup> reaffirmation of Tunisia's sovereign rights over all its national territory, which implies the establishment of a time-table for the evaluation of the Bizerta base; preliminary direct negotiations between France and Tunisia. That is the essence of the draft resolution before us, and it is precisely the solution which my country, within the Brazzaville group, recommended. Therefore, my country finds it difficult to understand how the representative of another State can come to this rostrum and try to give us a lesson in African solidarity. In fact...

66. The PRESIDENT: I am afraid I must remind the speaker of the purpose for which he has come to the rostrum. We are now in the stage of explaining our votes and the reasons for them. Instead of doing that, the speaker is reopening a controversy which has nothing to do with the issue before the special session or the draft resolution on which we should shortly be voting.

67. Mr. GALLIN-DOUATHE (Central African Republic) (*translated from French*): I do apologize, Mr. President. I am glad to have had this opportunity to realize that there are representatives who applaud when the representative of another country has said something that departs from the general rule of the Assembly.

68. For the Central African Republic, it was a question of direct negotiations. As far as we were concerned, these negotiations are indispensable, because France and Tunisia—which my country looks upon as its god-parents—are friends and we must at all costs encourage these two nations to renew their friendly relations. This is the ardent hope of my country. Therefore, my delegation, within the scope of the policy of the Brazzaville group, will give its support to the draft resolution before us [A/L.351].

69. Mr. OKAZAKI (Japan): May I join with the other delegations and offer the President my sincere congratulations on his election to his high office?

70. I wish to explain briefly the position of my delegation on the draft resolution [A/L.351] before us. After listening carefully to the statements made by various delegations in the Security Council and in the General Assembly, I should like to make the following observations. There is no doubt that Tunisia has sovereignty over its entire territory, including Bizerta. However, in view of its complicated legal and historical background, the recognition of Tunisian sovereignty over Bizerta is not enough to expedite an amicable solution of the problem. The solution of this question is to be sought through peaceful negotiations between the two parties in accordance with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

71. In this connexion it is gratifying to note that both parties have professed their willingness to enter into negotiations. The question is how to bring together the two parties quickly around a conference table. Every effort should be made to create an atmosphere which will

be conducive to such negotiations. Any attempt which is likely to make more difficult or to delay such negotiations should be avoided.

72. I am glad to note that the draft resolution before us embodies the factors I have mentioned. However, in the view of my delegation the draft resolution contains some provisions which do not seem to contribute to the creation of a climate which will enable both parties to arrive freely at an amicable solution of the problem. For the above reasons, my delegation finds it difficult to subscribe to the draft resolution.

73. However, I wish to make it quite clear that my Government is very eager to see that there is a fair and equitable solution of the dispute. My country being one of the African-Asian countries, and enjoying the most friendly relations with Tunisia, has full sympathy with Tunisia's legitimate aspirations and we wish to continue to do whatever we can to restore peace and promote prosperity in Tunisia.

74. Mr. RITCHIE (Canada): I should like to join with others who have spoken here before me in paying tribute to the wisdom and the tact with which the President has presided over our deliberations and which have made his presidency a memorable one in the history of the United Nations.

75. I wish very briefly to explain the position of the Canadian delegation on the draft resolution [A/L.351] before us. In our view the purpose of this special session should be the creation of an atmosphere which will be conducive to effective negotiations between the two parties. We should, we feel, urge direct negotiations between France and Tunisia, employing for this purpose language which is clear, persuasive and most likely to have practical effects. We should, we think, avoid wording which might lead to a hardening of attitudes.

76. The Canadian delegation is in sympathy with much of this draft resolution before us. We are concerned that France has not seen fit to comply fully with the provisions of the interim resolution<sup>6</sup> adopted by the Security Council. In particular, we agree with the urgent need for negotiations between the two parties. We do not think, however, that the language used in the fourth paragraph of the preamble is calculated to advance such negotiations. Further, we question whether the last operative paragraph does not go too far in prejudging the conclusions to be reached by bilateral negotiations between the two parties.

77. These considerations will determine the vote cast by my delegation.

78. Mr. CHERMONT (Brazil): The Brazilian delegation is going to vote in favour of the draft resolution [A/L.351] which is sponsored by thirty-two delegations. I stated the position of the Brazilian Government on the matter during the general debate. I should now like to emphasize just one point before the vote is taken. The Brazilian Government considers that we are faced with two problems as regards the presence of French troops in Tunisia. On the one hand, there are the troops which were deployed outside the base of Bizerta. The interim resolution<sup>7</sup> of the Security Council dealt with these troops, and I am confident that the Assembly will reaffirm that resolution. On the other hand, there are troops stationed within the base itself that were the subject of the exchange of notes of 17 June 1958, and whose continued presence on Tunisian soil is

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

clearly contrary to the wishes of the Government and people of that country, and therefore tends to constitute a constant source of trouble and even a threat to international peace and security.

79. Thus, in the view of the Brazilian delegation, France should comply with the Security Council resolution in order to settle the first problem, and the two countries should start negotiations on the second question, in accordance with the exchange of notes I cited and with a view to the eventual evacuation of all French troops from Tunisian territory.

80. Mrs. ROSSEL (Sweden): In considering its attitude toward the draft resolution [A/L.351] which is now before the Assembly, the Swedish delegation has been guided by a desire to see the United Nations make a constructive contribution toward the twofold goal of forestalling further bloodshed and of bringing the parties together. We feel that this goal can be furthered by a reaffirmation of the Security Council's interim resolution<sup>8</sup> of 22 July 1961. This point is covered in the draft resolution before us.

81. As for the problem of Franco-Tunisian negotiations, which has been dealt with by all delegations which have spoken in the Assembly debate, my delegation has noted that the two parties are agreed on the desirability of negotiations and that they are also agreed on at least one of the principles that should underlie such negotiations. I am referring to the recognition of Tunisian sovereignty over Bizerta. There seems to be, therefore, some basis for the hope that negotiations can be brought about and lead to fruitful results. These points are also taken into account in the draft resolution.

82. Although my delegation thinks that the language of the draft resolution is not altogether fortunate, we consider that a vote in favour of it would, on balance, best serve the cause of the United Nations and of peace in the area.

83. Mr. MATSCH (Austria): I should like briefly to set forth the position of my delegation. The Austrian delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution [A/L.351]. We would be unable, however, to support the fourth preambular paragraph if a separate vote were taken on this paragraph. The Austrian delegation sincerely hopes that negotiations will take place as soon as possible and lead to a positive result.

84. Mr. SCHMIDT (Denmark): May I add the congratulations of my delegation to those which have already been extended to the President on the occasion of his election to his high office?

85. Before a vote is taken on the draft resolution [A/L.351] the Danish delegation wants to state its position. Denmark will vote in favour of the draft resolution. In doing so, the Danish Government does not, however, endorse all parts of the draft resolution. It is my Government's opinion that the draft resolution in its present form does not render full justice to one of the parties in the current dispute. The draft resolution would have been better suited, in our view, to a favourable and speedy solution of the problem if the wording of some parts of the text had been different. I am referring in particular to the second and fourth paragraphs of the preamble and to operative paragraph 2. The Danish delegation has nevertheless decided to vote for the draft resolution, because up to now negotiations between the parties have not produced results and the present situation therefore implies grave risks. Under

these circumstances, the Danish Government deems it of great importance that it be established that the United Nations has a special responsibility and that the Organization receive the widest possible support in its endeavours to bring about a peaceful and lasting solution.

86. Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey): In explaining the vote of my delegation I do not have to dwell on the details of our position in the present disagreement, since we have already spoken at some length on this question both in the Security Council meetings and in the special session of the Assembly. I wish to speak directly and briefly on the draft resolution [A/L.351]. As is known, there is only one draft resolution before us, which means that either this text must be adopted or there will be no decision at all.

87. My delegation is in agreement with the essential provisions of that text, although we do not approve of the wording in certain parts, and consider that the factual presentation in other parts is also somewhat faulty. We would have preferred to vote separately on certain paragraphs. If that had been possible, my delegation would still have voted in favour of the operative paragraphs of the text, while we would not have given our support to the fourth preambular paragraph, with whose formulation my delegation does not agree. However, it appears that this will not be the case and that the Assembly will have to express itself in a single vote.

88. We shall vote in favour of this text, because we agree with its general conception, but we wish to state for the record that our vote does not imply agreement with the contents of the fourth paragraph of the preamble or with the wording of certain other parts. We shall vote in favour of this text in spite of our partial disagreement, because we wish to register our desire to see a prompt implementation of the Security Council resolution<sup>9</sup> and a speedy, just and peaceful solution of this regrettable question, with full recognition of Tunisian sovereignty over its entire territory through negotiations in the spirit and the letter of the Charter of the United Nations.

89. In conclusion, I wish to congratulate the delegation of Tunisia, and especially its Chairman, Mr. Mongi Slim, for the moderation and dignity with which they have presented Tunisia's case.

90. Mr. ZEA (Colombia) (*translated from Spanish*): The draft resolution to be voted upon [A/L.351] contains certain statements which exactly reflect the views of my Government, and which probably reflect the unanimous feeling of this Assembly about the immediate and extremely urgent need for the countries in conflict to open negotiations in order to reach an agreement in accordance with the principles of the Charter, and the need for France to carry out the Security Council's decision of 22 July,<sup>10</sup> completely and without delay, pending a satisfactory settlement by negotiation for the preservation of peace.

91. But there are other parts of the draft resolution with which my delegation does not completely agree. One is the fourth preambular paragraph which, we think, would imply that the Assembly has taken a decision on the substance of the question under discussion without having all the necessary evidence. Nor do we find operative paragraph 2 acceptable, not because

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

of its substance, but because its form and its wording might in future be adduced by any State as a precedent to justify disregard for the validity of freely accepted public treaties. We also find the last sentence of operative paragraph 3 unnecessary and unwise, since the Assembly cannot lay down in advance the specific objects of any negotiations which may be held; it is obvious that these objects must be agreed upon by the parties in complete freedom and without outside interference. We do not think that the Charter authorizes the General Assembly to make this kind of decision.

92. However, my delegation has decided to vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, not only as a demonstration of sympathy and admiration for the fortitude and resolution shown by the heroic peoples of Tunisia in the defence of its sovereignty, but also in order to emphasize my country's firm conviction that peace can only be achieved by mutual respect between States. Colombia also hopes fervently that the passing differences between two distinguished countries of the free world, with deep roots in democracy, will soon disappear.

93. Mr. ZOLLNER (Dahomey) (*translated from French*): Before undertaking to explain its vote, the delegation of Dahomey would like to associate itself with the congratulations and the unanimous tribute addressed to the President on his re-election.

94. Like many other delegations, the delegation of Dahomey has been deeply affected by this sanguinary conflict between two of its best friends, France and Tunisia.

95. The vote of my delegation is the logical result of the attitude adopted by my country since the beginning of this painful crisis; but a speaker from this rostrum this very morning thought he might arrogate to himself the credit for having determined the vote of Dahomey and of many countries that are friends of Dahomey. On the contrary, the sense of measure which my country has always tried to display will be needed in full to prevent an attitude from being influenced at the time of the vote by these statements, in which lack of finesse was exceeded only by arrogance. There is, however, no point in lingering any further over the slanderous assertions directed against us yesterday and today in these speeches, the self-complacency of which would be extraordinary if it were not merely puerile.

96. The principles now expressed in a draft resolution [A/L.351] were affirmed unequivocally by my delegation at the beginning of this unfortunate crisis in a letter addressed by it and other nations of Africa and Asia to the President of the Security Council. The Government of Dahomey which has not ceased since then in its efforts to bring about a resumption of sincere negotiations between the opposing parties in concert with the allied Governments of the Brazzaville group, could not but view the convening of this special session of the General Assembly with some reserve. Our short experience with the United Nations has shown us that, although the United Nations may well be the best instrument for the solution of conflicts, a General Assembly was often only a pretext for unseemly propaganda, which harmed the very cause the Assembly was supposed to serve. One State gave us added proof of this fact, yesterday and this morning.

97. Despite these apprehensions which were unfortunately largely justified, my Government was gratified that the principles it had always proclaimed should be expressed in the draft resolution. In this sad conflict,

the delegation of Dahomey will not vote for one country nor against the other. It will vote for a principle, since the affirmation of that principle here might be useful not only to the two parties concerned but also to the cause of international peace and security.

98. My delegation, therefore, will vote in favour of the draft resolution, in the hope that France and Tunisia will enter into negotiations with a view to reaching a solution in conformity with the United Nations Charter.

*Mr. Ritchie (Canada), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

99. Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia): The Australian delegation is unable to vote for the draft resolution [A/L.351] as it appears before us now. I think it would have been possible to devise a draft resolution that would have achieved the virtually unanimous support of this Assembly but the various discussions that have taken place here have not brought forth such a draft resolution.

100. The Australian Government does not believe that the draft resolution, in its present form, can be adopted to the best advantage, if our objective is to bring the two parties together quickly and effectively. Nevertheless, I have been impressed in this debate by the wide area of agreement among countries from all groups, from all continents. I have been impressed also by the moderation that has been shown by most of the speakers on all sides and I hope that the debates and the spirit shown here will have their effect upon the parties when they come together.

101. It is, in fact, urgently necessary that the parties should come together and that, in their negotiations, they pay regard to their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. It is the duty of all of us here to do what we can as individual nations, as friends of both of the countries, to try to bring them together and to attempt to help towards a solution. In fact, that is our primary obligation at this time, to try to bring them together; we believe that, as far as Australia is concerned, we are serving this purpose by abstaining on the draft resolution and in expressing this hope for prompt negotiations by both parties, with a view not merely to solving the immediate cause of the dispute but in the interests of the longer-term relations between the two parties in the area, in which France and Tunisia can, as partners, work together for the security and economic advancement of the whole of North Africa and the Mediterranean.

102. Mr. ENCKELL (Finland): I should like to explain the vote of the delegation of Finland. The draft resolution [A/L.351] before us does not, much to our regret, wholly meet our expectations. We would like to help in an efficient way towards the solution of this grave situation through bilateral negotiations. We could not fail to recognize the sovereign right of the Government of Tunisia to decide, according to its laws, as to the use of its national territory. This was the spirit in which we told the Secretary-General that we supported the request [A/4831] for holding this special session.

103. The Organization, if it wishes to fulfil its mission, must undoubtedly deal with situations such as this, and must do so without undue delay. It is also undoubtedly our duty to uphold the authority of the Security Council any situation with the purpose of facilitating its solution and of its decisions.

104. But it is as unquestionably our duty to deal with

and avoiding anything which might, rightly or wrongly, contribute to existing difficulties. We would have preferred not to find in this text certain formulations which we feel could have been and ought to have been avoided. It is, therefore, with certain reservations, and especially so with regard to the fourth preambular paragraph, that we are going to cast our vote in favour of the text before us.

*Mr. Boland (Ireland) resumed the Chair.*

105. Mr. GAMBOA (Philippines): Not having participated in the substantive debate on this question, my delegation desires to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Boland on his election as President of the General Assembly at this special session.

106. On instructions from my Government, I would like to explain our vote on the draft resolution [A/L.351]. My Government is one of the many represented in this world Organization which has the friendliest feelings for the peoples of Tunisia and France, the two countries directly involved in the dispute now before us. As a friend of both, we would not wish the present situation to deteriorate any further. In our view, it remains the task of friends of Tunisia and France alike, no less than of the United Nations, to create a favourable atmosphere for a mutually satisfactory settlement of the dispute, in accordance with the Charter.

107. It is our conviction that direct bilateral negotiations between the parties concerned hold the promise of bringing about that happy result. This the draft resolution seeks to accomplish. This was also what the Philippine delegation had in mind when we signed the request [A/4831] to convene the present special session.

108. We realize that this draft resolution is far from perfect. It would be difficult indeed to say that either party in the present dispute is absolutely right and blameless. What the General Assembly seeks to accomplish through the adoption of this draft resolution is to make possible a reconciliation of views, leading to an amicable settlement of their differences. It would be a disservice to the cause of world peace and security to allow the Bizerta dispute to worsen into a crisis. The Philippine delegation has welcomed this opportunity to help foster a climate conducive to the reconciliation between France and Tunisia at this critical hour in world history.

109. For these reasons, my delegation is happy to give its support to the draft resolution in question.

110. Mr. CABALLERO (Bolivia) (*translated from Spanish*): I wish first to congratulate the President, on behalf of the delegation of Bolivia, on his re-election at the present special session of the General Assembly and on the magnificent way in which he has discharged so high and important a task.

111. My Government has paid the greatest attention to the grave issue of Bizerta since it arose. We have been particularly anxious in the present case, because of the concern and interest with which Bolivia has followed the achievement of independence by the new African countries, and because of the historical and almost secular friendship which binds Bolivia to France.

112. At the end of the debate at this special session, in which we have heard clear and profound legal analyses of the problem, as well as the usual skirmishes of the cold war, we have come to the moment of voting with a feeling of despair, which we cannot hide. We fear that all these deliberations and efforts will not lead to solutions as satisfactory as those for which we had hoped, and

that once more this chamber, in which all peoples of the world, especially small nations such as my own, place their hopes for peace, work and progress, will have been used as a theatre for impassioned demonstrations by those who wish to impose a totalitarian hegemony on the world.

113. Until the last moment we tried to keep alive the hope that the two nations, France and Tunisia, both of which are so close to the feelings of my people, would be able to find a way to negotiate directly and to settle the differences which gave rise to the situation. This has not happened, and before the evidence of France's disregard for the recommendations of the Security Council,<sup>11</sup> which were designed to defend the principle of sovereignty, the very essence of nationality, my delegation will vote in favour of the one draft resolution proposed by the African-Asian nations and Yugoslavia [A/L.351], although we are forced to state that the Bolivian delegation holds certain reservations with respect to operative paragraph 3 and the fourth preambular paragraph of the draft.

114. Mr. RAKOTOMALALA (Madagascar) (*translated from French*): The Malagasy Republic, together with its brother States of the Brazzaville group, will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the General Assembly [A/L.351]. It will do so, for it views this resolution as merely an appeal to negotiations between France and Tunisia.

115. True, my delegation would have preferred a different wording of some of the preambular passages, particularly the second and fourth paragraphs, because, being first and foremost practical, it feared that these passages might render less easy the conversations which the two parties, in its view, should undertake immediately with a view to establishing the time-table for withdrawal.

116. To France, which has such a glorious and proud history and which from 1959 to 1960, under the leadership of General de Gaulle, has shown the world the extent of its devotion to freedom by granting independence to fifteen territories and 29 million human beings, that it still assists so generously and so disinterestedly, my delegation would say: The greatness of France will be increased even more if you comply with the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations which you helped to establish fifteen years ago and of which you have until now been one of the firmest supporters.

117. My delegation would remind Tunisia and President Bourguiba of the conciliatory efforts within the United Nations and of the great work of national reconstruction which have made the Tunisian State, until now, a model and a symbol for its African brothers.

118. We would say to both parties: Let us have no more vain pride, for the peace of the world may be disturbed by this absurd conflict, which is not in keeping with your greatness nor with your obligations to the free world.

119. It is in this spirit that the Malagasy delegation, like the whole Brazzaville group, will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Assembly.

120. Mr. MOROZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): At this moment, when the General Assembly is about to vote on the draft resolution submitted by thirty-two African and Asian countries, the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics considers it necessary to state briefly the position it will adopt in the vote on this draft.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

121. In doing so, we first of all take into account the fact that the discussion which has been held in this hall over the past week has shown that the majority of the African and Asian countries and a considerable number of Latin American countries, as well as all the socialist countries belonging to the United Nations, have unanimously condemned France's actions. These States have resolutely called for the immediate cessation of French aggression, for the withdrawal of French armed forces from Tunisia, and for unconditional respect and strict observance of Tunisia's sovereignty.

122. Many representatives of African, Asian, Latin American and socialist countries have supplied convincing proofs of the incontestable fact that foreign military bases constitute a bulwark of colonialism, a constant danger to peace, a threat to the national independence of small countries, and a permanent source of international tension.

123. The very discussion in this Assembly, the whole course of the debate on the French aggression in Tunisia, must be regarded a serious warning to the French colonizers. In this we see an important result, already achieved, at this point, in the General Assembly's third special session.

124. The logical conclusion of the efforts made, at this session, to curb French aggression is of course the adoption of an appropriate decision by the General Assembly.

125. If we approach the text of the draft resolution submitted by the African and Asian countries from this point of view, we must recognize and stress that it contains a series of important statements reflecting the general thesis which has predominated in the discussions of these last days and which has been expressed in resolute condemnation of French aggression in Tunisia.

126. The draft resolution proposes—rightly, in our view—recognition of the fact that the presence of French armed forces on Tunisian territory constitutes a violation of Tunisia's sovereignty and that this is a permanent source of international friction, endangering peace and security.

127. The operative part of the resolution rightly urges France to implement the Security Council resolution calling for a cease-fire and the withdrawal of the armed forces to the positions which they occupied before 19 July 1961.

128. The draft resolution further contains an important provision—and this requires special emphasis—stating the main task: the withdrawal of French troops from Tunisian territory.

129. At the same time we cannot refrain from observing, like many other delegates who have spoken here, that in several respects the wording of the draft could be considerably strengthened and that the demands to be made by the Assembly could be expressed more vigorously.

130. However, we fully understand the position of the African and Asian countries which have stated here that the Assembly's adoption of their draft resolution without any changes—I emphasize, without any changes—should vindicate loyalty to the principles of the United Nations Charter not only in words but also in deeds.

131. We therefore associate ourselves with those African, Asian and Latin American countries which, from this rostrum, have called upon the Assembly to support the thirty-two-Power draft.

132. The Soviet delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution. We consider, for our part, that the

adoption of this draft will show that the majority of States Members of the United Nations are firmly convinced of the need to end French aggression in the North African and Mediterranean area, so that peace and calm may be restored in this part of the world as speedily as possible.

133. The adoption of this draft resolution should serve as a pledge that all peace-loving countries and peoples will continue to give resolute support to the Tunisian people in its noble struggle for national independence and for sovereignty.

134. Mr. Mongi SLIM (Tunisia) (*translated from French*): I apologize for trying the patience of the President and the Assembly again, but I believe it is time for the Tunisian delegation to express its position on the draft resolution submitted by thirty-two African and Asian delegations [*A/L.351*], since, after all, this question essentially concerns my country, its sovereignty and its territorial integrity. I should like, therefore, to state very briefly my delegation's feeling regarding this draft resolution.

135. The extent of the aggression suffered by Tunisia, the effects of which are still apparent, in view of the occupation of our territory and the usurpation of authority that normally belongs solely to the sovereignty of our country,<sup>12</sup> all the more since France on 20 March 1956 solemnly proclaimed the independence of Tunisia, give sufficient ground to my delegation to adopt a forceful position in this debate, that is justified by many precedents on the subject in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

136. The 1950 precedent is clear and precise. Since provisional measures decided on by the Security Council have not been applied, the Security Council recorded the failure clearly and distinctly and called upon all Member States to repel what it characterized without any ambiguity as an act of aggression.

137. The Suez precedent in 1956 also supports my delegation's position. After the Security Council had been unable to take a decision, the General Assembly adopted two clear and precise resolutions urging the withdrawal of forces [*resolutions 997 (ES-I) and 998 (ES-I)*]. These resolutions may not have characterized the act as aggressive, but they strongly urged the withdrawal of troops and sent an emergency force to see that the decision was carried out.

138. May I remind you also of a precedent of the past year, that of the Congo (Leopoldville). There again, the Security Council adopted various resolutions calling upon a Member State, Belgium, to withdraw its troops immediately; some were approved unanimously and all were supported by the two great world Powers that were permanent members of the Security Council.

139. In accordance with these precedents, and because of the circumstances in which we find ourselves despite the endeavours and everything done by friends from Africa and elsewhere to lead France to a better understanding of justice and right and of the obligations it itself undertook, particularly by its letter of 17 June 1958,<sup>13</sup> we were justified in adopting an energetic attitude, having on our side our rights, the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter, and also many precedents on the subject.

<sup>12</sup> Protocol of agreement between France and Tunisia signed at Paris on 20 March 1956.

<sup>13</sup> *Security Council Official Records, Sixteenth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1961*, document S/4869.

140. But taking into account the difficulties that are inherent in the diversity of opinion in this essentially democratic Assembly, we determined to keep to essentials. In other words, we restricted ourselves to calling very forcefully for the rapid and immediate execution of the interim resolution of the Security Council<sup>14</sup> and asking for what we had always requested, namely, that honest and sincere negotiations should begin very rapidly between France and Tunisia with a view to deciding the sole point which appears to us to be in controversy: the terms and time-table for the withdrawal of French troops from Tunisia and for the transfer of all the installations, occupied up to this day by these troops, to the Government and authorities of Tunisia. And thus we have come to feel that this draft resolution [A/L.351] is an honest draft, although certainly moderate in tone as well as in its operative provisions, i.e., in the recommendations which we feel the special session of the General Assembly is entitled to make, in view of the present situation.

141. My delegation knows very well that this draft resolution will not satisfy some delegations which will find it lukewarm and moderate, and I know too that it will not completely satisfy other delegations which will find its wording, if not its spirit, perhaps a little too strong. But we must take the middle road, which satisfies nobody, but at least meets the requirements of the United Nations itself, the United Nations Charter and the principles of law and justice it embodies.

142. For these reasons, my delegation supports this draft resolution.

143. May I say that despite our grief, our suffering, our losses, the harm we have suffered and the insults to our national dignity, we shall be satisfied if the case of Tunisia and Bizerta, and of the south of Tunisia, has succeeded in establishing some unity in the African continent, which has suffered so much in the past from foreign domination and which has need of unity and of the co-ordination of its energies in a renewed fraternity, in the face of the afflictions of one of its own, to build itself the road to progress.

144. May I also express my satisfaction and that of my people if, despite our sufferings, the case of Bizerta and Tunisia has served to strengthen this Organization in which we all place our most fervent hopes not only for the settlement of cases like the Bizerta affair but particularly for better world co-operation, for better understanding between the different trends existing in the world, and for a better solution of all the dangerous conflicts which are now likely to confront this Organization.

145. If an almost unanimous vote on this draft resolution strengthens the United Nations, that will satisfy my Government and my people, and their sacrifice will not have been in vain. More particularly, if this resolution, once adopted, is as loyally executed by the two parties to which it is addressed, it will also help to re-establish Franco-Tunisian friendship; such friendship is still possible despite the sufferings of the Tunisian people, but only after the interim measures demanded by the Security Council have been completely and loyally executed, and after sincere negotiations have begun between France and Tunisia to determine all the terms and time-limits for the final withdrawal of all French troops from Tunisian national soil.

146. You will forgive me if I briefly review the events that led to this affair; such a review may not be very encouraging, but it may make clear to you how we felt when we were the victim of that aggression.

147. It happened in June 1940. Habib Bourguiba and some of his companions were in one of the underground chambers of an army prison at Marseille. By methods which only political prisoners can guess, Bourguiba secretly possessed a small radio receiving set. On 18 June a voice had been heard over the radio. It came from London. It was glorious, magnificent; it opposed the domination of French soil by foreign troops, which also at that time were attempting to occupy the French Atlantic coasts in order to ensure the safety of the Third Reich. The voice we heard then, in Fort Saint-Nicolas, called on the French people to resist such an occupation by all possible means.

148. Afterwards, the United Nations was established by France and other countries to provide ways of safeguarding any State, small or large, against aggression from any direction whatever.

149. Was it not sad for this man, who had been at Fort Saint-Nicolas on 18 June 1940, to find that the person whose voice he had heard at that time and who is now at the head of the Government of France, has permitted such an aggression to take place against a small country like Tunisia, which is essentially peace-loving and ready to use all means to establish peace, understanding, co-operation and harmony in the world, and above all the principles of the United Nations and its Charter. As one of our colleagues has just said, by obedience to the Charter, the application of the principles it proclaims and the loyal execution of General Assembly resolutions we cannot but become greater.

150. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now proceed to take a decision on the question before it. In this connexion, the Assembly has before it a single proposal, the draft resolution submitted jointly by thirty-two Members [A/L.351]. I now propose to put this draft resolution to the vote of the Assembly.

*A vote was taken by roll-call.*

*Uruguay, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.*

*In favour:* Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Albania, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Cameroun, Central African Republic, Ceylon, Chad, Colombia, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Leopoldville), Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Denmark, Ethiopia, Federation of Malaya, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, Upper Volta.

*Against:* None.

*Abstaining:* Uruguay, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, document S/4882.

*The draft resolution was adopted by 66 votes to none, with 30 abstentions.\**

151. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of the United States, who has expressed a wish to explain his vote after the voting.

152. Mr. STEVENSON (United States of America): I had not thought to speak again, but as so many delegations have seen fit to explain their vote, I hope the Assembly will forgive me if I do so likewise, even at this late hour.

153. I have explained previously that the United States has been engaged almost incessantly for several weeks in an effort to bring these parties together. There are several aspects of this resolution, I have also explained, with which we agree, including our profound regret that the resolution<sup>15</sup> of the Security Council has not been fully implemented and that the parties have not met to discuss and to agree upon the final disposition of the facilities now under the control of France at Bizerta.

154. We have felt obliged to abstain because we are fearful that this resolution will not accelerate, but will retard, these talks and the peaceful results which have been the almost unanimous hope of the many speakers we have heard during the past week.

155. With the conclusion of this special session, a new stage of this unhappy affair must now begin. The resolution itself is at best a prelude to negotiations between the parties—early negotiations, we hope—which are necessary before there can be a definitive solution in Bizerta which takes full account of Tunisian sovereignty and the right of Tunisia to be master in its own house.

156. As in the past weeks, the United States pledges to the Assembly its unrelenting efforts to do everything it can within its power to bring about the result which is not only desirable, but also indispensable, to any effective and final solution of this situation. Our earnest hope is that this resolution, which so many Members approved, will not retard these talks, and as

\* The delegation of Niger subsequently indicated that it wished to be put on record as having abstained in the vote on the draft resolution.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

I say, we pledge our continued and tireless effort to avoid this consequence and to bring France and Tunisia together to settle this unfortunate conflict between old friends. Our role has not been an easy one, nor has it escaped criticism here during the past week. But I would remind Members that, as we say in our language, discretion is sometimes the better part of valour.

157. Finally, may I congratulate the representative of Tunisia on his speech here this evening, as always, moving in its moderation.

158. The PRESIDENT: That brings to an end the work of this third special session of the General Assembly.

159. If I may, I should like at this stage in a few words to express my profound and sincere personal thanks for the congratulations which so many delegations have extended to me in their statements and for the more than kind personal references which have been made to me. I value more than I can say the friendly feelings and the goodwill on the part of my colleagues of which I take these references to be the expression. It has been a great honour for me to serve the General Assembly of the United Nations in this Chair. No one could wish for a more exalted privilege. I am profoundly grateful to all delegations, without exception, for the co-operation and understanding that they have extended to me and which has done so much to lighten my task during my term of office.

#### AGENDA ITEM 2

##### Minute of silent prayer or meditation

160. The PRESIDENT: Before adjourning this third special session I would now invite Members to stand to observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

*The representatives stood in silence.*

##### Closing of the session

161. The PRESIDENT: I now declare closed the third special session of the General Assembly.

*The meeting rose at 10.55 p.m.*