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President: Mr. Carlos SOSA RODRIGUEZ  
(Venezuela).

### Address by Mr. Víctor Paz Estenssoro, President of the Republic of Bolivia

1. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I have the honour to invite Mr. Víctor Paz Estenssoro President of the Republic of Bolivia, to address the General Assembly.

2. Mr. PAZ ESTENSSORO (President of the Republic of Bolivia) (translated from Spanish): It is an honour for me to speak from this high rostrum, an honour which I appreciate. Let me at the outset, on behalf of the people of Bolivia, convey a greeting to all the peoples of the world through their representatives assembled here, and at the same time express our gratification at the election of a Latin American as President of this Assembly, and a man whose vast experience of international affairs is appreciated by everyone.

3. The fact that yesterday the United Nations celebrated another anniversary is a happy coincidence, for it gives me an opportunity to express our profound gratitude to all who in one way or another contributed to the birth of the Organization as an expression of the profound desire for peace of a world that had only just emerged from war, and to all those who continue to work for the realization of the ideals which called forth the United Nations. This Organization provides a useful forum in which all nations can carry on fruitful discussions of international issues and problems; and for small nations it is the living embodiment of the principle of the juridical equality of all States and an effective instrument for the preservation of their rights. But the faith that we have justifiably placed in it is based, above all, on the excellent work it has done to ensure the independence of colonial peoples. This is proved by the appearance of so many new Members in this hall in so few years. I do not think it is too much to say that had this Organization not existed, many peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America would not yet have secured recognition of their national independence or of their right to self-determination.

4. A few days ago a majority in the Assembly expressed confidence in Bolivia by electing it as a mem-

ber of the Security Council, an honour for which we are deeply grateful, I believe that this makes it imperative for me to explain our position and where we stand in international affairs.

5. Bolivia is a land-locked country in the heart of Latin America, of which it is geographically the epitome. It has a population representing a fine mixture of Indian and European blood, and it has been experiencing a revolution for the last eleven years. Its national, popular revolution is being carried out by workers, peasants and middle-class people, the basic aim being the creation of a society in which man may be truly free and wealth equitably distributed. This revolution is national because, being based on the actual conditions in Bolivia and its needs in relation to the rest of the world, it owes no political or ideological allegiance to anyone. It is a people's revolution because its essential aim is the realization of the ideals and interests of the masses.

6. Prior to the revolution, an enormous proportion of Bolivia's national wealth was concentrated in the hands of a numerically tiny group made up of three great mining firms and about 200 feudal land-owning families. That group constituted the State, and its interests were served by those who administered it, made the laws, and applied them, and led public opinion. The country's economy, reduced to dependence on a single product, had been upset to such an extent that, while the latest technical advances were being used in the mines, the land was being worked with the same type of plough as had been used 2,000 years ago. In Bolivia there were actually two nations living side by side, one composed of the city and mining population, circumscribed by a fictitious democracy in which only 3 per cent of the population could vote, and another, composed of 2.5 million peasants not included in the monetary economy who were treated as serfs and could be bought with the land to which they belonged.

7. The Bolivian revolution began with the nationalization of the great mining concerns and the transfer of the land to those who tilled it. That resulted in a redistribution of wealth on a more just basis, action by the State in the service of the people, the liberation of the serfs and their access to the consumer market, and the creation of a genuine democracy which includes all Bolivians. Today we are experiencing the great adventure of economic and social development. The aim is to increase the total volume of wealth available and at the same time to diversify our production by exploiting the potential resources of our rich territory, with a view to increasing every Bolivian's share of that wealth and providing better opportunities, both materially and spiritually.

8. The revolution and the long and arduous process of its consolidation have given Bolivia a unique and well-defined national personality. Bolivians no longer think of Bolivia as the hostile and alien possession of

the few, but as the creation of the many, representing their own land, their political rights and their economic security. This national personality is inevitably reflected in international affairs. In its foreign policy, Bolivia follows an independent line in keeping with its geographical position, the stage of its development and the will of the masses. Therefore, Bolivia's attitude to world problems has been dictated, above all, by the principles in which it believes and the historical background of its development. First of all, we believe in the supreme need for peace. We have experienced war, and we are still suffering the consequences, for we were imprisoned in our high mountains by an unjust war.

9. Peace should not be merely a pious hope, but a rule of law to be followed. It is the will of the peoples, and thus safeguarding it should be not only a moral duty incumbent upon all those who govern but their primary obligation. We believe that there are some obvious ways of guaranteeing the right of all men to peace: general and complete disarmament, obedience to the rule of law and the strengthening of international organizations.

10. The treaty partially prohibiting nuclear weapons tests signed in Moscow<sup>1/</sup> was enthusiastically welcomed in Bolivia, not because it fulfils all our hopes but because it is the first glimmer of light in the long night of mistrust in which the world has been shrouded. It has already helped to slacken the tensions which have been built up in many parts of the world and to create a climate that is propitious for broader understanding.

11. This is a fateful moment in the history of man. Mankind had never been closer to catastrophe, but at the same time man has very seldom had a better chance not merely of evading the danger but of removing it once and for all. The danger itself, its unbelievable magnitude, the enormous destructive power held by man, and the memory of the many millions who sacrificed themselves unnecessarily in war in the hope that if they died they would die for peace, should make us take advantage of this opportunity and not waste it.

12. We must progress towards the prohibition of all nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament, until finally we get to the point of outlawing war. But that objective is still a mirage; and it is so because in the atmosphere of distrust generated by the conflicting interests of the great Powers it seems better to trust to force rather than to rely on law. This is a dangerous error, as our long and painful experience has shown, because trust in force must inevitably lead to the use of force. It is always better to rely on the law, although if we are to do so, certain prior conditions must obviously be fulfilled: the law must have been freely agreed upon; it must be equally binding on all nations; it must harmoniously combine the true interests of all countries; and, finally, it must be practical and dynamic, for it must be in keeping with reality and it must recognize that reality is perpetually changing.

13. At the present time, however, the fact that the law exists is not enough to ensure that it will be respected; there is admittedly less distrust, but it has nevertheless not altogether disappeared. I think that to achieve what is needed we should broaden the

powers of the United Nations, and we can be sure that, with the passage of time, it will become less and less necessary to use these powers, for we are told that the men of good will shall inherit the earth.

14. I believe that many countries are in favour of strengthening the United Nations, and I would like to state that Bolivia shares their view. By the same token, we are in favour of an increase in the membership of the principal organs so that there will be proportional representation of the countries that have achieved independence in the last few years, for if this Organization is to be strong, it must be just.

15. The urgency of outlawing war takes no account of frontiers. In this era of clashing world interests, when the destructive power of modern weapons is increasing and becoming limitless, uncontrollable and blind, we have no assurance that even the smallest conflict can be localized or that those who would prefer to remain outside it can avoid destruction. But the urgency is even greater in the case of the developing countries. So long as the danger continues to exist, the economy of the committed nations, based on preparedness for war, will continue to need supplies of cheap raw materials because it has no productive purpose. On the other hand, once peace has been guaranteed, the tremendous resources now immobilized by the great Powers in their increasing stockpiles of weapons can be used to extend to the entire world the benefits of the wealth which all nations are helping to create. This would be to the advantage of everyone, because besides raising the level of living of the developing countries, it would widen the consumer markets and increase production under a peace economy and it would alleviate the explosive situation created by the gap between the handful of enormously rich countries and the many others that are still struggling against backwardness, ignorance and hunger.

16. Last year, as a contribution to the cause of peace, my country together with Brazil, Chile and Ecuador submitted a draft resolution whereby Latin America would be declared a denuclearized zone,<sup>2/</sup> and we support the initiative taken by Mexico with the same end in view.<sup>3/</sup> With a similar goal in mind, we still favour the proposal we made ten years ago for a proportional limitation of the military budgets of the Latin American countries.<sup>4/</sup>

17. Secondly, Bolivia believes in the great principles of self-determination and non-intervention. To them we owe our independence and the preservation of our nationhood, and that is why we are forever unshakably attached to them as guides for our international conduct. Those principles have our support also because they imply the need and the duty to respect the will of the people in all cases. This is in keeping with our deepest convictions and provides a norm for finding peaceful solutions to many of the problems created by competing ideologies.

18. For all these reasons there is no justification for any economic stranglehold or any political domination of one nation by another, any more than there is for any kind of oppression in relations between man and man. That is why we have never hesitated to support the struggle of peoples to improve their living

<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventeenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 90 (A/C.1/L.312/Rev.2).

<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., Eighteenth Session, Plenary Meetings, 1239th meeting, paras. 22 and 23.

<sup>4/</sup> Ibid., Eighth, Session, First Committee, 663rd meeting.

<sup>1/</sup> Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963.

conditions and gain their freedom. That is why we have always repudiated the intolerance which takes refuge behind spurious reasons of skin colour or religious belief.

19. I wish to take this opportunity to say that Bolivia, in conformity with this outlook, shares the view that instead of letting time go by uselessly we must take more and more vigorous action to hasten the independence of peoples which have not yet obtained it and to defend the rights of ethnic and religious groups which are still oppressed. It seems necessary to recall, in this connexion, that on the American continent there are still colonies and territories in the possession of outside Powers. I am sure there are satisfactory means of correcting this state of affairs, which is contrary to historical trends.

20. The progress made in removing mistrust in relations between nations and the brighter prospects that have been opened up for living together in harmony have brought about a situation in which there appears to be a realigning of forces on a less antagonistic basis. On the other hand, there is the continuing division between the highly industrialized countries and others which are at various stages of development. Bolivia is in the latter group and has mobilized all its potential energies to remedy this situation and set a course towards future prosperity. Like many other countries, it enjoys the financial co-operation of various friendly countries and the technical assistance of the United Nations. Nevertheless, from its own experience, it has learnt that self-help and outside assistance are not sufficient to reduce the enormous and distressing differences which separate one nation from another.

21. Whatever their geographical situation, the developing countries have similar interests, and this makes it necessary for them to seek a better understanding with each other. There are many fields in which joint action can be really effective, but none offers more immediate interest than that of safeguarding the price of raw materials, on which almost all of them depend to a greater or lesser extent, as part of a fairer adjustment of the terms of trade.

22. The silent but stubborn struggle which my country is waging to overcome economic backwardness and all its consequences is rendered more difficult by the fact that it is land-locked. This is a particularly grievous fact because Bolivia was despoiled of its wide and rich coastal belt by a treaty imposed by an occupying army after a war which we did not provoke. We are confident that a solution can be found to this vital problem by means of frank discussions and negotiation to our mutual advantage on the basis of non-territorial compensation, as has been proposed to us more than once.

23. Mankind now stands at a crossroads; it must choose between continuing along the same old path of mutual distrust, which involves all sorts of risks, and going forward along the narrow path of hope which now lies open before it. The United Nations, on which expectations are centered more and more, can play an increasingly important role through its power to take decisions.

24. The people of Bolivia are confident that the right decision—and one of great historical value—will be taken, and ardently prays that this will be so.

25. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I thank His Excellency the President of Bolivia

for the important statement he has just made to the Assembly.

*The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m. and resumed at 3.45 p.m.*

26. The PRESIDENT: The representative of Chile has the floor to speak on a point of order.

27. Mr. BOSSAY (Chile): I have asked for the floor in order to speak on a point of order. I have no desire to depart from United Nations tradition and I do know that it is not customary to reply to a Head of State when he addresses the General Assembly. As His Excellency the President of Bolivia has made reference to my country in terms which Chile categorically rejects and must refute, I wish to inform Members that the Permanent Mission of Chile will transmit its views on this matter to the Assembly in writing.

## AGENDA ITEM 16

### Election of three non-permanent members of the Security Council (continued)\*

28. The PRESIDENT: Members will remember that at the 1246th plenary meeting the election of a non-permanent member of the Security Council was postponed because no positive result was obtained in the four ballots which were held to fill the only remaining vacancy.

29. In accordance with the rules of procedure we have held three restricted ballots and one unrestricted ballot in the first series of three unrestricted ballots. The Assembly will now hold two more unrestricted ballots. Any Member of the United Nations can be elected except the present members of the Security Council, the members of the Security Council whose term of office expires this year and the members who were elected at the present session of the Assembly. The States which cannot be voted for at the present election are the five permanent members of the Security Council; the three non-permanent members of the Security Council—Brazil, Morocco and Norway; the two members that have already been elected—Bolivia and the Ivory Coast; and the three non-permanent members of the Council whose term of office expires on 31 December 1963—Ghana, the Philippines and Venezuela.

30. Consequently, any State not included among the thirteen I have just mentioned can be elected in the present unrestricted ballots. While the ballot papers are being distributed, I would ask Members to write the name of one State only on the ballot paper each time. Ballot papers bearing more than one name will be declared invalid. The Assembly will now proceed to hold the second unrestricted ballot.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dashtseren (Mongolia) and Mr. Lynch-Shyllon (Sierra Leone) acted as tellers.*

*The vote was taken by secret ballot.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	111
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	111
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	111
<i>Required majority:</i>	74

\*Continued from the 1246th meeting.

*Number of votes obtained:*

Malaysia . . . . .	56
Czechoslovakia . . . . .	55

31. The PRESIDENT: Since the required majority has not been obtained we shall proceed to a third unrestricted ballot.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dashtseren (Mongolia) and Mr. Lynch-Shyllon (Sierra Leone) acted as tellers.*

*The vote was taken by secret ballot.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	110
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	110
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	110
<i>Required majority:</i>	74

*Number of votes obtained:*

Malaysia . . . . .	58
Czechoslovakia . . . . .	52

32. The PRESIDENT: Since all three unrestricted ballots have been inconclusive, the Assembly will now hold a series of three ballots restricted to the two Member States which received the largest number of votes in the third unrestricted ballot—namely, Malaysia and Czechoslovakia.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dashtseren (Mongolia) and Mr. Lynch-Shyllon (Sierra Leone) acted as tellers.*

*The vote was taken by secret ballot.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	110
<i>Invalid Ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	110
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	110
<i>Majority required:</i>	74

*Number of votes obtained:*

Czechoslovakia . . . . .	56
Malaysia . . . . .	54

33. The PRESIDENT: Since neither of the two countries has obtained the required majority, the Assembly will now hold the second restricted ballot of this series. Only Czechoslovakia and Malaysia can be voted for.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dashtseren (Mongolia) and Mr. Lynch-Shyllon (Sierra Leone) acted as tellers.*

*The vote was taken by secret ballot.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	110
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	110
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	110
<i>Majority required:</i>	74

*Number of votes obtained:*

Czechoslovakia . . . . .	56
Malaysia . . . . .	54

34. The PRESIDENT: Since neither of the two countries has obtained the required majority, the General Assembly will now hold the third restricted ballot of this series. Only Czechoslovakia and Malaysia can be voted for.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dashtseren (Mongolia) and Mr. Lynch-Shyllon (Sierra Leone) acted as tellers.*

*The vote was taken by secret ballot.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	109
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	109
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	109
<i>Majority required:</i>	73

*Number of votes obtained:*

Czechoslovakia . . . . .	58
Malaysia . . . . .	51

35. The PRESIDENT: Since neither Czechoslovakia nor Malaysia has obtained the required majority, the Assembly will now proceed to the first of a series of unrestricted ballots.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dashtseren (Mongolia) and Mr. Lynch-Shyllon (Sierra Leone) acted as tellers.*

*The vote was taken by secret ballot.*

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	110
<i>Number of invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	110
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	110
<i>Majority required:</i>	74

*Number of votes obtained:*

Czechoslovakia . . . . .	56
Malaysia . . . . .	53
Honduras . . . . .	1

36. The PRESIDENT: Since no country has obtained the required majority and no substantial change of position has been shown, I suggest postponing further balloting until a later meeting, the date of which will be announced in due course. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees.

*It was so agreed.*

37. The next plenary meeting will be held on Wednesday, 30 October, in the morning. At that meeting the Assembly will consider the report of the General Committee and the reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Security Council.

*The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.*