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AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. VASQUEZ CARRIZOSA (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, this visit to the United Nations provides me with an opportunity to congratulate you on your well-deserved election by the General Assembly. It is a gesture of recognition of your personal qualifications and of the contribution which your country has made to international co-operation. Colombia is confident that under your expert guidance the General Assembly will successfully complete its work.
2. This is the first time the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the new Government of Colombia attends this world Assembly. On 7 August last, President Misael Pastrana was constitutionally inaugurated. He was elected by the people of my country in the freest and most-closely contested election campaign in the last years, in which a record number of ballots was cast and voters were able to decide the national destiny under the protection of the laws.
3. The democratic character of this Government is fully in accord with the efforts of the two national parties to maintain a coalition government and to continue to carry out the social programmes, which are the irreversible goal of the new President of Colombia. He is determined to strengthen the achievements that have been gained within law and order, so as to apply an integral agrarian reform, an intensive and well-balanced development of our territory and a gradual and progressive rise in the standard of living of the underprivileged classes.
4. The experience of the National Front, in existence for twelve years, has been one of the most significant developments in the history of Colombia. In its respect for human rights and constitutional guarantees, it has created an atmosphere favourable to understanding and agreement among all of our political groups. In a disturbed and confused world, shaken by protest and

revolution, Colombia has achieved progress through democratic channels and under the rule of law. We have full confidence in this national consensus and in the spirit of our institutions.

5. Furthermore, we have well-defined international purposes which support the principles of the United Nations. As a country we have an old and deep-rooted tradition of acting always with the strictest sense of justice and by closely observing the rules of human rights.

6. The foreign policy of Colombia, since the earliest decades of the nineteenth century, the first years of our independence, has been oriented towards international co-operation. An evidence of this is the missions sent by the liberator and President of the Republic, Simón Bolívar, to various States in America and Europe, to explain the main principles of our new nation and to anticipate the Congress of 1826,¹ which adopted the first inter-American Treaty of solidarity, mutual aid and reciprocal respect for sovereignty.

7. That was the spirit with which we established our national boundaries. In the midst of a lack of knowledge of our geography, it was necessary to track down ancient titles to justify the legal demarcation line and to chase foot by foot the landmarks of a frontier extending over several thousand kilometres. In establishing its borders, Colombia scrupulously followed a juridical criterion and thus gave the supreme example of adherence to international law and to peaceful means. Any territorial disputes with our neighbours were settled in accordance with international law, with no thought of war, invasion or conquest.

8. It is now many years since our last frontier treaty was signed. When that chapter of our diplomatic history was closed, we looked back with gratitude to the founders of the Republic of Colombia, for it was they who instilled in us the spirit of co-operation and friendship with our neighbours and with all States of our continent. It was they who proclaimed clearly the Colombian doctrine of judicially-established frontiers, specifically those of *uti possidetis juris* of 1810, by which the nations that inherited the Spanish dominions were recognized as rightful owners of the territories of the various general captaincies and vice-royalties. It was this doctrine that very largely regulated the demarcation of frontiers in our hemisphere.

9. Our national sovereignty is defined and limited by law. The ambition to which we have adhered through

¹Congress of Panama held from 22 June to 15 July 1826.

the years has been the observance of international law, which is the supreme rule for justice among peoples. It is thus possible for us who are today members of the Colombian Government to state that we do not covet any territory other than that which has been assigned to us legitimately by border treaties and international agreements, as, for instance, those related to our continental shelf and our fishing zones. Every inch of our land is acknowledged as ours by treaties which we finally succeeded in working out through friendly agreements. We should like to follow the same procedures with our neighbours regarding the delineation of the marine and submarine areas.

10. In the first century of their existence the Latin American countries lived apart from international life, involved as they were in internal strife, and after the epic of liberation came the need for our countries of the Western Hemisphere to settle complicated differences over frontiers. Now, in the twentieth century, Latin America has an international personality and is proud to come to this Assembly of the United Nations with her theses on law, human dignity and economic justice among peoples.

11. Latin America, in our opinion, has a lofty mission in world gatherings: to plead unceasingly for international co-operation, for the rule of law and justice and for better treatment for the developing peoples, as the basis for world balance. We are not satisfied with what has been done so far and we feel obliged to say so within this Organization, because of the grave situations which we see throughout the world.

12. We have adhered to the ideals and methods of international co-operation both at the regional level and at the wider level of the United Nations, and now we find strong reasons to warn that the period of the isolation of peoples is over and that they are bound to join hands to undertake the works of peace, the very pressing task of preventing war and the equally urgent duty of extending economic and social justice throughout the world.

13. No spot on earth is immune from attack. The Second World War was a clear demonstration of that fact, which is no longer disputed by anybody in this age of technology and science, when man has succeeded in his greatest adventure to travel to other spaces. Since then the destructive power of weapons has been perfected to the utmost, and our planet seems smaller than ever before, more densely populated and more exposed to the danger of universal devastation. At the same time, the needs of the under-developed peoples cannot wait. If the arms race is not stopped, we would face ominous harbingers and the not entirely unimaginable danger that what are now local wars may escalate into more general wars.

14. The indispensable co-operation between peoples and States requires, of course, certain conditions without which it would be a vain purpose or an empty word. States must completely accept the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular to refrain from using threats or force against

the territorial integrity or the political independence of any State and always to act according to international law and to apply the procedures for the peaceful resolution of differences. Wherever illegal force is used there is a weakening of the noble concept of international co-operation so dear to all peoples of all nations.

15. The dilemma of force versus law, of violence as a means to dominate other nations or against their self-determination in choosing their national destinies and forms of government, which will best respond to their national criterion, whether social or political, is an accurate moral x-ray of the disquiet of our time and the summary of the past twenty-five years of history. After the Second World War ended, we did not see that era of peace and justice for which everyone yearned. We saw only a continuation of violence and the subordination of some States by others. It can be said that this Organization was born in the middle of a tremendous drama of mankind, when the war had not yet ended, and it was impossible to implant co-operation among all nations. We have yet to see the attainment of such aims as a just peace firmly established and peoples living together in freedom.

16. Whereas technology and science reveal astonishing progress we have hardly advanced at all in the field of human relations. Yet we know where the essential values lie. There is no co-operation without respect for international law and respect too for self-determination and the dignity of the individual. The United Nations is itself founded on the belief that all the Member States agree on certain fundamental principles.

17. Let us recall Pascal's words: "Force without law is tyranny, and law without force is impotence."

18. The United Nations should initiate without delay a process of honest self-criticism of its potentialities and achievements in collective security and the maintenance of peace. The twenty-five years during which the Charter of the Organization has been in force prove the ineffectiveness of the system adopted in San Francisco to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

19. There has been a glaring contradiction between the law and the harsh reality endured by people in some regions of the world where they suffer the bitter insecurity of poverty, where freedom is unknown, where war is the natural atmosphere in which generations are being raised. Nor have crises been lacking to show up the deficiencies of the system, because the organisms entrusted with the preservation of peace have been powerless to prevent such situations or have had insufficient authority to bring about an adequate solution. In the Middle East and in Asia there are wars, which public opinion is becoming accustomed to considering as an endemic state or a permanent situation, while acts of piracy provoke universal protest.

20. We are witnesses to an undeniable deterioration of the peaceful procedures of international law, already fallen into disuse with the "cold war" episodes, the

visible opposition between two blocs of countries separated by conflicting ideologies and situated in major zones of influence. The United Nations then lost a large part of its authority because of the unfortunate precedents created, and the Charter of the United Nations became an ineffective instrument. Although it is true that, after these twenty-five years of international tensions, we do perceive friendly contacts between States on both sides of the iron curtain.

21. Certain other factors are not contemplated in the United Nations Charter. Such are the undeclared wars which erupt and are waged without formal announcements and which international organizations decide, with an excess of optimism, to consider that they do not exist. Then too there is the contemporary phenomenon of indirect aggression. This is perpetrated in various ways, sometimes, as war propaganda against another sovereign State, sometimes as instigations, so that improvised armies will disturb the internal peace and development of another country. Methods of creating violence have multiplied to such an extent throughout the world that the fundamental problem of the United Nations is, first of all, to restore confidence in its procedures among peoples.

22. Yet the real and very grave problem of the vacuums in the collective security system is caused by the failure of a number of procedures which have been replaced by force of arms. The pyramid of armaments, which crushes humanity under its ruthless weight, has replaced collective security based on law and, unfortunately, what prevails now is the might of the strongest rather than the United Nations Charter. Let this be said clearly.

23. The problem of collective security is a very serious one and should be examined without delay by the Member States of the United Nations, unless we wish to see the total collapse of a great ideal. We have reached the lowest point of incredulity in a system in which we all stand staring at "the balance of terror", which looms over us like a menacing spectre which we should like to be forever removed.

24. Faced with the absence of a general system of collective security it becomes even more imperative for countries to improve regional agreements. In America at least and in our hemisphere we find a series of principles which cover legal equality among States, the obligation of non-intervention and solidarity against any kind of aggression and armed attack. These are the result of a lengthy evolution in our continental relations.

25. Not only can we not refrain from applying these principles and methods of our regional system, but Colombia is furthermore determined to strengthen it, to extend it and endow it with the means to cope with the changing circumstances of the contemporary world, and to fulfil the guiding fundamental axiom of the Chapultepec Conference of 1945² which states that international law shall be the rule of conduct for all

States. In America we have outlawed war, as the anti-war treaty of non-aggression and conciliation of 1933³ records, and we have established regional collective security by the inter-American treaty of reciprocal assistance of 1947.⁴

26. Regional agreements are, at this juncture in the life of nations, the indispensable complement of the theoretical and furthermore inoperative world-wide collective security system. Colombia expounded this view at the San Francisco Conference, and we reiterate it, after decades of lack of action, unresolved crises and downright failures. We can now appreciate the historic significance of the debate at San Francisco. We did not want for warnings as to the general collective security system, entrusted as it was to a minority group of Great Powers in the Security Council, each of them having obtained the power to paralyse any decision of this body.

27. It is quite true that the United Nations Charter was not drawn up in San Francisco in its entirety: it reached us with its essential, its most fundamental chapters dealing with the preservation of peace and with security already worked out. That explains why Colombia insisted so strenuously in 1945 to obtain confirmation of the regional agreements. It is a fact that certain great Powers had taken it upon themselves to assume responsibility for framing the future statute of the world Organization, as though called upon to do so, at the Conferences of Yalta in 1945 and Dumbarton Oaks in 1944. The countries that did not belong to that exclusive and powerful group had no choice but to agree to a whole series of rules to which no amendments of any kind were considered admissible.

28. In San Francisco the tenacity of my country and of the American States, which backed up the ideas fervently and rightly championed by the chief of the Colombian delegation, our former President Alberto Lleras, did make it possible with regard to Article 52 on regional agreements to add paragraphs 2 and 4, and particularly paragraph 2, which invites States participating in such agreements to "make every possible effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council".

29. The experience of these twenty-five years has proved Colombia to have been right in firmly insisting on the need to preserve the integrity of such regional agreements as are compatible with the Charter of the United Nations and to make full use of them in the interests of peace and security. In several continents these agreements are clear guidelines for the security of numerous States in facing difficult circumstances, and at times when such situations are rendered desperate by aggression and intervention, which would otherwise have meant submission to the cumbersome machinery of the Security Council.

²Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace held at Mexico from 21 February to 8 March 1945.

³Signed at Rio de Janeiro at 10 October 1933.

⁴Signed at Rio de Janeiro on 2 September 1947.

30. Moreover, Article 51 of the United Nations Charter recognizes the rights of Member States of the Organization, including naturally the American countries, to act individually and collectively in self-defence "until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security". The chief of the delegation of Colombia at the San Francisco Conference explained the situation in the following words:

"If at any given time an armed attack should occur, that is to say, an act of aggression against a Member State of a regional group, then self-defence, either individual or collective, exercised as an inherent right, shall automatically operate within the terms stated by the Charter, until such time as the Security Council might impose the appropriate sanctions against the aggressor country.

"In the case of the American States, aggression against an American State constitutes aggression against all the American States, and in supporting the State attacked all States will be exercising their right of legitimate self-defence in order to repel the aggression. This is what is called the right of legitimate collective defence."⁵

31. One of the items on the agenda of the General Assembly is the "Need to consider suggestions regarding the review of the Charter of the United Nations". Colombia attaches particular importance to this problem, because we are convinced of the urgency of the task of *aggiornamento* of the Organization, which has become prematurely old in twenty-five years.

32. The mere proliferation of new States calls for criteria to evaluate their capacity to assume responsibilities in this Organization. The "mini-State" is a phenomenon which requires a certain amount of study if we wish to avoid excessive improvisation of judicial persons who aspire to act as sovereign entities. On the other hand, there are certain complex situations, the existing realities of which we should at least begin to consider, so that within a few decades we will not be accused of having established within the United Nations the image of an international community, arbitrarily cut up, without the participation of important States.

33. In the world today, even the oldest and the most venerable institutions and beliefs of peoples have had to undergo revisions in keeping with the times. There is a concept of change that obliges every institution to take into account new social circumstances. Besides, unceasing evolution is a natural phenomenon in law. Anglo-Saxon jurists recognize it in their Common Law, and no code can be exempt from a day-to-day interpretation of jurisprudence.

34. One could say a great deal—perhaps even too much—about the shortcomings of the United Nations Charter. It might not be amiss to specify the most

conspicuous of them. We need, for example, first a reaffirmation of the principles of international law which concern good relations among States; secondly, an effective system to prevent war and to determine the aggressor; thirdly, a guarantee of the actual existence and defence of human rights; and, fourthly, the adoption of procedures for the peaceful settlement of international disputes in order finally to abolish war.

35. However, our immediate desires do not go so far and take into account reality. Indeed, Colombia's proposals are within the limited possibilities that we deem attainable at this time. We have preferred to postpone a discussion of subjects which, on account of their scope and many-sided implications, would require previous acceptance by the majority of this Assembly. We accept as a fact the much-discussed mechanism of the Security Council. At the same time, we observe, not without anguish, that the unchecked decaying of the procedures and institutions of the United Nations Charter becomes more notorious from year to year.

36. We should like to find a way to achieve universality for the United Nations. This is a first purpose in response to the idea of a world system of peace and justice, as well as to the nature of certain problems which cannot be solved in the absence of the countries concerned. We need a procedure that will add both flexibility and effectiveness to the principle in the United Nations Charter, whereby it is provided that "membership in the United Nations is open to . . . peace-loving States which accept the obligations contained in the . . . Charter and, in the judgement of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations".

37. In the field of collective security, the enunciation of initiatives is not an easy task without first altering the Security Council machinery, which is the engine of the system. We consider, however, that it would be useful to suggest a more categorical implementation of the regional agreements for the maintenance of peace. In most cases when disagreements between States arise, the problem for the United Nations is to prevent an immediate confrontation between the great Powers, and to this end regional agreements should be resorted to for the implementation of conciliatory action, as provided for in Article 33 of the Charter. This procedure would leave in the hands of the parties concerned in the conflict area a choice of the most suitable peaceful means to find a solution without having to fear intervention by the great Powers. We are seeking a stricter interpretation of Article 52 of the Charter in such a way that it would be essential for Member States of the United Nations before appealing to the Security Council, to work out a peaceful settlement of their local or regional disputes through any agreements previously subscribed to by them. This transfer of mandate from the Council to the regional organizations would make the former a supreme and second instance at which the dispute in question could be examined and settled.

38. We wish to have the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter left unchanged, since those States which

⁵Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, III/4/9 (vol. XII, p. 687).

have the greatest responsibility for the maintenance of peace should not be deprived of their capacity to act on behalf of the United Nations and, on express recommendation of the Security Council at times of extremely serious threats to peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression. This would not mean that the Council, as provided for in Article 53, might not make use of the regional agreements if it should deem this more appropriate.

39. In the second place, we recommend more active participation by the International Court of Justice in the work of peace. It is undeniable that that high Court has been kept completely apart from the collective security system and its action has been confined to the arbitration of occasional disputes. In view of its vested authority and multinational character and in view also of the fact that it represents the different legal traditions of the Members of the United Nations, the Court could also pass judgement on the strictly legal aspects of international disputes by an emergency procedure open to all States without exception, whether or not they are Members of the United Nations.

40. Our ideas for possible revision of parts of the Charter in certain specific aspects are submitted by Colombia to Governments represented at this Assembly for consideration, so that we may review with them all the factors of the problem and find the most adequate solutions in order to instil new life into the United Nations.

41. Colombia is particularly interested in the subject of the law of the sea. The General Assembly, in accordance with resolution 2574 A (XXIV), should consider the desirability of convening a conference on such an important subject. We can state in advance that we are ready to participate actively in the necessary preparatory work.

42. A great deal of progress has been made in establishing principles either unknown or ignored in 1945, when the President of the United States, Mr. Harry S. Truman, issued an important proclamation, which prompted similar proclamations by other States to claim jurisdiction in some cases, and in others to claim sovereignty of the State over the continental shelf, the criterion being based on different geographical and legal considerations. This was an era marked by anarchy in the development of the law of the sea.

43. The American States were the first to establish adequate regional doctrines in this respect. The Inter-American Council of Jurists declared, as early as 1956,⁶ among other postulates, that "the distance of three miles as the limit of territorial waters is insufficient, and does not constitute a general rule of international law". And it adds, consequently, that "the enlargement of the zone of the sea traditionally called 'territorial waters' is justifiable". The resolution adopted in Ciudad Trujillo that year, at the Inter-American Special Conference on Conservation of Natural Resources:

the Continental Shelf and Marine Waters,⁷ included the principle of the Convention of 1958 on the Continental Shelf which reads as follows:

"The sea-bed and subsoil of the continental shelf, continental and insular terrace, or other submarine areas, adjacent to the coastal State, outside the area of the territorial sea, and to a depth of 200 meters or, beyond that limit, to where the depth of the superjacent waters admits of the exploitation of the natural resources of the sea-bed and subsoil, appertain exclusively to that State and are subject to its jurisdiction and control."

In 1958 the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea⁸ adopted four international conventions which refer to the main aspects of this question, namely, territorial waters and adjacent zones; the high seas, fishing and the conservation of the natural resources in the high seas; the continental shelf.

44. At the Ciudad Trujillo Conference in 1956, Colombia expressly requested international co-operation in the solution of marine problems and announced that, in order to ease the way to unify points of view and eliminate divergencies it would "abstain from adopting unilateral regulations". It would have been easy for Colombia to follow the example of other countries by formulating a unilateral statement as to its rights to the continental shelf or its adjacent zone, but Colombia preferred to await the outcome of the United Nations Conference held in 1958, and to incorporate its principles in the conventions which were adopted and signed there. We were consistent with our past attitude in determining territorial sovereignty, and abiding by the rules of the law were content simply to wait to co-operate with all nations in a general conference.

45. There can be no mistake. International co-operation is the only way to avoid situations of insoluble difficulty, a searching for clear rules as to the extent of the rights of States. This indispensable co-operation has produced such lofty principles as those proclaimed by the International Convention on the Continental Shelf, which makes it clear that a coastal State exercises exclusive sovereign rights over the areas referred to in that instrument for the purposes of exploration and development of natural resources.

46. Nevertheless, progress in the science of oceanography has left far behind certain rules of the Convention of the Continental Shelf, in which the right of sovereignty was envisaged as extending to 200 meters or, if possible, still further, without setting a limit to the exploitation or exploration of the natural resources of these zones. Furthermore, there is the Latin American consensus which grants the coastal State equally exclusive rights over the living resources of the part of the sea nearest its coast. There is an unequivocal need to complement this 1958 Convention with new and explicit provisions in the light of the most recent experience.

⁶Third meeting of the Council held at Mexico from 16 January to 4 February 1956.

⁷Held at Ciudad Trujillo from 15 to 28 March 1956.

⁸Held at Geneva from 24 February to 27 April 1958.

47. Therefore, Colombia is in favour of the idea of convening a general conference of Member States of the United Nations to carry on the work discontinued since 1958. We desire this provided that, at the next meeting, due consideration will be given to all the various factors to which we have referred and which constitute an indivisible whole. On looking back upon the unilateral statements following President Truman's 1945 proclamation, we see them as completely outdated. International co-operation is opportune and, indeed, indispensable, so as to lead to the adoption of new rules that will take into account the needs of all countries.

48. We shall therefore give preferential attention to the important proposal made in 1970 by the President of the United States, Mr. Richard Nixon, on the possible exploration and exploitation of the ocean floor by a community of closely associated nations, in such a way as to respect the interests of the coastline State and to obtain a source of investments to assist the developing countries.

49. In respect to the law of the sea, Colombia has adhered strictly to the principles of international law and will continue to do so. Were we to act otherwise, we would be breaking with our past tradition of asserting our sovereignty and claiming maritime rights of domain only in so far as we are authorized to do so by international conventions and public treaties.

50. Colombia is not merely a country of mountains and wide open spaces, both veined by many rivers; Colombia is also a land with long coastlines washed by two oceans; it needs to delve into the riches of the seas to benefit its people. This represents nothing more than a consequence of obvious international principles.

51. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations is celebrated amidst the distress of the peoples of a host of developing countries. It is a chapter in which we cannot conceal the gravity of the problems which confront us. They were not foreseen in all their vast dimensions at the San Francisco Conference, nor in the Bretton Woods Agreements.⁹

52. In the last few months numerous and very learned reports have examined the chief factors of the shortcomings in the aid to the developing countries. It is now a generally admitted and uncontradicted truth that the present world is divided into industrialized and poverty-stricken zones. This great economic gap of our time widens every day with the existence of two price rates, one for industrial goods and another for the raw or semi-finished materials of the developing countries.

53. A world divided into two very different zones, makes us think back to a description in the work *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* written in 1776 by the British economist Adam Smith. It shows the consequences of the discovery of the New World, which gave rise to an opening up of markets

for the goods of Europe and progress in the arts and industry of that continent, in exchange for the precious metals of the New World, extracted in the midst of the rusticity and poverty of the inhabitants of that region. We see, then, that the gap in economic development goes back a long way.

54. We would have to add other considerations. The areas most in need of development have been deprived of the immense capital invested in the sophisticated technology of the artifacts of death. While expenditures on intercontinental missiles increase constantly, the volume of aid to the developing countries has so steadily been declining that it is now at the 1961 level. The United Nations has doubtless made an effort to relieve the situation but it can hardly feel satisfied with the disappointing results of the first Development Decade, which ended in 1970.

55. In his report to the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1964, Mr. Raúl Prebisch stated:

“One of the main objectives of the United Nations Development Decade is the attainment of a minimum annual growth rate of 5 per cent in the income of the developing countries by 1970. This is certainly a rather modest target and not much higher than the average rate of 4.4 per cent registered in the 1950s. Nevertheless, it will be extremely difficult—for many of the developing countries to achieve and maintain this rate of growth unless the present Conference brings about a policy of international co-operation that would make it possible to eliminate the imbalance in trade.”¹⁰

56. That rate of 5 per cent per annum really meant something much less in the average *per capita* earnings in the peripheral countries. Even though the goals were so modest they were not attained nor was implementation of the recommendations attained, such as the one that the industrialized nations set aside 1 per cent of the gross national product of each of them to aid the developing areas. The point we have reached has been graphically described in the Pearson report¹¹ with these figures: 34 per cent of the world population, composed of industrialized nations, received 87.5 per cent of the gross national product of all countries; 66 per cent of the world population, corresponding to the group of less developed countries, received barely 12.5 per cent of the above-mentioned gross national product; 22 per cent of the world population live in the less developed countries, where *per capita* income was less than 1 per cent per annum; 48 per cent obtained from 1 to 2 per cent and only 30 per cent of the outside countries have exceeded 2 per cent.

57. The foreign debt of the developing countries, created by large export credits and development aid, has rapidly increased to almost 50 billion dollars, while

¹⁰*Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, vol. II, *Policy Statements* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.II.B. 12), p. 5.

¹¹*Partners in Development—Report of the Commission on International Development* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1969).

⁹Signed at Washington, D.C. on 27 December 1945.

the servicing of these debts has increased at the rate of 17 percent per annum, according to the Pearson report, which was drawn up by a high ranking commission of experts of the World Bank. The first Development Decade does not offer much reason for enthusiasm in most countries.

58. Given these figures we cannot fail to see that the Second Development Decade will be decisive for the fate of both the developed and the developing areas of the world, since neither can remain isolated from the other. Prosperity beside poverty is bound to provoke an upheaval. The effects are already perceptible in the outbreaks of non-conformity and violence in various parts of the world. The problem of trade in the developing countries is one which cannot be postponed. Possibly it is more important, in the long run, than the problem of aid itself. If the multilateral machinery for assistance is to be improved, there must be an effective increase in the contributions of capital.

59. If the world maintains the present cleavage between rich and poor countries, and if, moreover, the exclusive commercial blocs favouring some countries and making outsiders of others are consolidated then the international situation cannot but show in the Second Development Decade a balance of frustration and disappointment far more alarming than that of the first.

60. Colombia has come to this world Assembly to renew its great hope in the United Nations. Every human endeavour is subject to the storms of time. Nor should we forget that the effects of several centuries of enmity and misunderstanding among peoples cannot suddenly vanish like a midsummer night's dream. Despite the short-comings we have pointed out, the United Nations is called upon to tackle a superhuman task.

61. Progress cannot be measured in terms of months and years but in terms of decades and centuries. To arrive at the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, in 1789, entire centuries of personal suffering had to be borne, and tyranny brought to the point of utter weariness. Democracy did not spring up overnight as though by magic. It was a progressive movement in the minds of people, while the ideas of Utopians and the thoughts of philosophers perforated like drops of water the wall of misunderstandings and the stony deafness of the leaders, until the time came when there was a great overthrow of the institutions.

62. The United Nations is the creature of a Utopia of brotherhood and a philosophy of concord among peoples with respect for the rules of international law, which little by little are finding the arduous way to positive achievement. These mostly lie ahead. What we now perceive appears imperfect. But that which existed yesterday was even further removed from the ideal we cherished. Mankind in 1970 will, on looking back, become aware of the fact that we have laid the foundations for a future world organization, based on the active participation of all peoples in the management of the community of nations.

63. Just now we find ourselves at a moment of evolution. The United Nations has seen that its structures need changing. This signifies an intellectual process of adaptation to changes in international ideas, whose aims are the abolition of racial discrimination, the suppression of social injustice, the strengthening of peaceful methods to solve controversies, and disarmament, as a prelude to security.

64. Security, disarmament and the peaceful settlement of disputes, were three intentions that won acclaim on the conclusion of the First World War. They were the signals of hope. Today we reiterate those purposes and add to them the clamours of a destitute mankind so that, through international co-operation, we may find effective means for harmonious development on all continents, together with social justice and respect for human rights. The United Nations is still a land of hope for a better world.

65. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand): Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to convey to you on behalf of the delegation of Thailand warm and sincere congratulations on your election to the Presidency of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The close and friendly relations that my country has traditionally enjoyed with your great country are an additional source of gratification, and we have no doubt that your rich experience and perceptive mind will guide us through our deliberations to a happy and successful conclusion. We are also mindful of the fact that you bear a name which was illustrious in the annals of the body that preceded the United Nations—the League of Nations. The honour that the General Assembly bestowed upon you is therefore all the more significant, and our best wishes go to you in discharging your new responsibility and in upholding the distinguished family tradition.

66. I should also like to extend our deep appreciation to my good friend, Mrs. Angie Brooks-Randolph, the outgoing President of the General Assembly. Her Presidency was marked by her firm yet cheerful attitude. Her deep convictions and faith in the United Nations also made her a very effective and eloquent spokesman for the world Organization during her tenure of office.

67. It is not often that a United Nations General Assembly session is convened with even some faint rays of hope piercing through layers of clouds overhanging the dark sky. But the tragic civil war in Nigeria has now been brought to an end. In Europe hopeful signs of greater calm and relaxation have appeared over the horizon. The United Nations, on its way to celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of its foundation, should be thankful for whatever modest change there may be in circumstances, from continuing crises and widespread conflict to an improvement in the understanding and relationships among major European Powers. It is true that peace has not been restored in all parts of the globe, nor has it been firmly secured in places where clashes and conflicts have been a daily routine. In the Middle East soldiers still remain with their loaded guns in the trenches and bunkers along the Suez Canal, but at least a cease-fire has been more

or less observed by the parties most concerned. However, guerrilla activities, including hijackings and the destruction of civil aircraft, as well as the detention of innocent passengers, and lately the fierce fighting in Jordan, mar the prospects of peace in that highly explosive area.

68. No doubt these rays of hope are only a beginning, but a beginning to which we have not been accustomed for quite a long while. Therefore, those who have contributed to bringing about this more encouraging state of affairs should be congratulated and supported in their worth-while efforts towards a notable lessening of international tension. The United States should be commended for proposing and urging a cease-fire in the Middle East; so should the parties which have accepted it, namely the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Israel, as well as the United Nations mediator, Mr. Gunnar Jarring, who has been working so patiently for peace in that troubled part of the world.

69. In Europe, the treaty which the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union have recently concluded,¹² by which the parties agreed to renounce all resort to force and to recognize and respect the present borders of Germany, has cleared the atmosphere of Europe of the immediate threats of conflict and has brought along with it cleaner air, an air of *détente* and peaceful coexistence. There again, the responsible parties should be commended for their successful efforts to rid the world of a major cause of confrontation and hostility. What can and will be done to consolidate this initial gain remains to be seen, but at least the nations concerned can pursue their task of pacification and of anchoring the peace firmly in the European continent in more relaxed surroundings without the pressure of propaganda and its accompanying charges and countercharges.

70. Only in Asia—and more particularly in South-East Asia—do the skies remain ominously dark with incessant fighting, killing and destruction. The invading hordes of North Viet-Nam and their clients, the Viet-Cong, continue to maim, terrorize and slaughter innocent men and women along the breadth and length of South-East Asia, from the Kingdom of Laos to Cambodia and South Viet-Nam. In their ruthless enterprises they were and still are supported by and supplied with economic means and destructive weapons by their sponsors in Asia and Eastern Europe. That is why, at the urgent request of the victims of aggression, forces from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Thailand, much against their desire for peace, had to rush to the rescue. Otherwise the subjection of small nations would have been consummated and their free and sovereign existence would have been wiped out. At the present time, although the likelihood of the aggressors imposing their will and their military solution on their victims has become more remote, the former, bred in their intransigent imperialistic traditions, continue to inflict sufferings and depredations upon millions of people yearning for peace and tranquillity.

71. One may wonder why—while elsewhere in the world, in the Middle East and in Europe, people have grown tired and wearied of conflicts and fighting—the Marxists in Asia never have enough of terrorizing and burning and murdering, and why their thirst for conquest and domination is so far unquenchable. While on the defending side one nation after another—first the United States then Australia, New Zealand and Thailand—has declared its readiness to withdraw its forces from the theatre of war, the other side has shown no sign of relenting in its belligerent attitude. Instead they have stepped up hostilities in Laos, in Cambodia and also in the northern part of South Viet-Nam. Was it, one may ask, because the free world side had shown signs of compromise that they mistook for weakness and even surrender? That seems to be the only plausible reason which can explain the unyielding attitude they have invariably adopted at the Paris negotiations.

72. If one attempts to draw a comparison between what occurs in Europe and the Middle East and what obtains in South-East Asia—as one should try to learn from experiences in other parts of the world—a striking conclusion readily emerges. The situation in Europe and the Middle East reflects what courteous diplomatic language may call the “desire for peace”, but the hard realities of international life may more simply term it a “power stalemate”. The existence of the massive strength—both nuclear and conventional—of NATO and the Warsaw Pact in Europe and the might of the Soviet Union and the might of the United States in the Middle East confronting each other have resulted in this *de facto* stalemate which, if broken would undoubtedly lead to a catastrophe of major proportions and result in an indescribable holocaust for all those who may become, involved. In these circumstances victory has little if any meaning and its cost may be too exorbitant for anyone to hope to reach it.

73. Such a situation, unfortunately, has not yet developed in our part of the world, or at least not to the extent to which it prevails in the above-mentioned two areas. The régimes of Peking, Hanoi and Pyongyang still possess dominant military might, especially in the conventional field, and outside Powers who may be a match for them are not inclined to confront them unless it becomes a nuclear confrontation, which nobody wants anyhow. That is why those Asian Marxists continue to push—implicitly or otherwise—for a military solution even if it means a widening of the conflict as we have seen recently in Laos and Cambodia. They must indeed feel grateful to all those who keep reciting the litany that no military solution is possible in Viet-Nam or even in the whole of South-East Asia. Such an exhortation suits the invaders very well, for the last thing they want is to have the defending side put up military opposition. They very much prefer to be allowed to pursue their own military objectives. At the same time they are tenaciously pressing for the acceptance of their formula for a political surrender, the latest version of which they put forward only last week in Paris.

74. While one has to admit that the withdrawal of various defending forces will not help create a power

¹²Signed in Moscow on 12 August 1970.

stalemate like the one which obtains in other parts of the world, it is meant—at least as far as my country is concerned—to show how desirous and eager we are to strive for a political settlement rather than one based on the use of force. However, since the other side continues to be recalcitrant other approaches have to be explored. Since a military stalemate is not realizable in South-East Asia one has to look for a political stalemate, a modest step towards which was initiated by the Asian and Pacific nations congregating at Djakarta a few months ago.¹³ It was regrettable that this assemblage was not strong enough to produce tangible results because it lacked the necessary ingredient of power—even political power—which could create the kind of stalemate that would ultimately lead to negotiations or a possible political *modus vivendi* for peaceful coexistence. To have any chance of success there must be an accrual of more weighty States to restore the balance. The participation of the four major Powers or, failing that, of the two great Powers on the same side will more certainly ensure success and make possible a prospect of meaningful negotiations and eventual settlement. That undoubtedly is the optimum. How it can be brought about is perhaps the greatest and most difficult problem of our time, which no person of goodwill should brush aside without giving it a thought or even a try.

75. In the first place the suggestion that France and the United Kingdom should be urged to play a role in Asia, for instance in helping resolve the Cambodian question, is both logical and realistic, in our opinion. For one thing both countries have had long and intimate relations and experience with our part of the world. France, in particular, was until recently an Administering Authority in Indo-China, and the United Kingdom, for its part, is currently a co-chairman of the Geneva Conference. The two countries are therefore aptly suited to play a worthy part in dealing with problems facing South-East Asia.

76. As to the two world Powers, they have been and still are backing their respective side in the present conflict. If both of them could find a basis for an agreement, the fighting would grind to a prompt stop. A cease-fire could then be declared and negotiations started. At the present time the talks in Paris are not moving ahead because only one sponsoring Power sits at the conference table while the other conveniently stays outside and continues to pull the strings without being exposed or committed to any course of compromise or any proposal for a give-and-take. That is undoubtedly a miscalculation brought about by a hasty decision inspired perhaps by the internal political requirements of the moment rather than by rational considerations. In our opinion, as long as this disadvantageously unbalanced composition persists it would be unrealistic to expect any worth-while break-through or progress at the Paris talks. If the truth of this is now realized, efforts must be made to repair the said shortcoming. The solution of inviting the Powers which, as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, are entrusted with the main responsibility of

ensuring and maintaining world peace is a reasonable way out of the present procrastination and stagnation in the efforts to restore peace and tranquillity in South-East Asia.

77. The question of the representation of China in the United Nations will undoubtedly come up for discussion again this year. The position of the Government of Thailand on this matter remains unchanged. Without going into the merits or demerits of the case, it is our firm conviction that the Republic of China, a founding Member of the United Nations and a permanent member of the Security Council, is entitled to continue to represent the Chinese people as it has done since the inception of the United Nations. Furthermore, in our view, the question of representation is one which should be left to the Chinese people itself and any settlement of the issue should be the responsibility of the two contending parties. No initiatives or measures taken by Member States of the United Nations can be expected to yield satisfactory results. Nor can any solution or formula devised by others be expected to gain the acceptance of the rival parties.

78. Concerning the question of disarmament, the world has grappled with this problem for a time far in excess of the age of the United Nations. For obvious reasons the problem has been an elusive one, but international efforts persist and the United Nations has been in the forefront in trying to devise measures for arms control. Its accomplishments have been notable but limited, and some loop-holes remain evident. For instance, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII)] does not cope with the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the world still anxiously awaits a successful outcome of the strategic arms limitation talks between the two nuclear Powers. Moreover, adequate security guarantees for non-nuclear States are lacking. The partial test-ban Treaty¹⁴ in order to be effective needs the adherence of other nuclear Powers and should be enlarged to cover all environments.

79. On the other hand, in the quarter century that the United Nations has existed, the world body has spent an unconscionable time in debates on the kind of weaponry that is less likely to be employed. It has not dealt enough with conventional armaments which are being used every day of the year in all parts of the world for destructive purposes and which could easily spark a widespread conflagration. This is one aspect of arms control that should be pondered more seriously and energetically during the present United Nations Disarmament Decade.

80. Considering the present international requirements, the peace-keeping responsibility of the United Nations must of necessity continue to be one of the main pillars of the work of this Organization. Without the effective functioning of this important aspect of United Nations activities, international peace and security are in great jeopardy. It is therefore regrettable that the progress made in the course of the past year

¹³Conference of Foreign Ministers of Asian and Pacific countries held on 16 and 17 May 1970.

¹⁴Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963.

in the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations has been slower than it was the year before. It has often been claimed that the problem is highly complex and that the differences are of so fundamental a nature that negotiations are bound to be time-consuming. While no one could have expected rapid progress in the work of the Committee, it was nevertheless the hope of all that after the introduction of the first report of the working group last year some meaningful results might be forthcoming.

81. We would like to urge the General Assembly to instil a renewed sense of urgency in the work of the Committee and, in particular, in the negotiations in the working group, and efforts to reach a compromise must be further intensified.

82. The conscience of mankind continues to be assaulted by the racist policies of *apartheid*. The United Nations has for all these years been calling upon the responsible party to desist from these unjust and repugnant policies which are in clear violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

83. This deplorable state of affairs does not redound to the credit or effectiveness of the world Organization. The international community looks for decisive action to the United Nations as well as to those major trading partners that are in a position to influence the thinking of the Governments concerned.

84. The question of violations by some Member Governments of the arms embargo called for in a series of Security Council resolutions is undoubtedly a matter of grave concern. There is therefore a need to strengthen the arms embargo and the Security Council was wise to adopt resolution 282 (1970) of 23 July 1970, calling upon all States to take measures towards that end. The implementation of that resolution will, in our opinion, lessen the danger of violent conflict in southern Africa.

85. Suppression of the inalienable rights and freedoms of the oppressed peoples in southern Africa has remained unabated. The inhumane policy of *apartheid* was extended to the international Territory of Namibia, and the illegal minority régime in Southern Rhodesia felt encouraged and continued to defy the United Nations resolutions as well as world public opinion.

86. The United Nations, in our opinion, has a worthy record in decolonization activity. Since 1945 no fewer than forty-five Territories have gained independence, and yet when we are about to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples the momentum that the world Organization has generated in the past two decades seems to be withering away. Let us hope that the 1970s will bring a greater determination by the vast majority of Member States and the subjected peoples to erase, once and for all, the remaining vestiges of colonialism in Africa and other parts of the world. Let us also hope that the colonial Powers

and their major trading partners will become aware of the archaic nature of *apartheid* and colonialism, and that they will show political wisdom in recognizing the inherent right of self-determination for the peoples in the colonial Territories.

87. Recent events on the international scene have given clear indications of a trend which, if allowed to go unchecked, leads towards the law of the jungle. It is therefore imperative that the peoples of the United Nations reaffirm their strict observance of the principles and provisions of the Charter and their respect for international law and justice. While the Thai Government has appreciated and welcomed the unremitting efforts of the United Nations in codifying and developing international law in many fields, it is regrettable that recourse to international law and justice has not been the standard practice of nations.

88. My delegation feels that greater advantage should be taken of the International Court of Justice—as in the recent action of the Security Council, when it exercised its competence to seek an advisory opinion on the legal consequences for States of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia.

89. There are, of course, various other modes available for the settlement of disputes by peaceful means as specified by Article 33 of the Charter. Member nations should therefore be persuaded to comply with their obligation under Article 33 and to have recourse to such means in the future. Resort to the good offices of the Secretary-General should likewise be encouraged.

90. As is well known to all, the United Nations was brought into existence on the premise of the practicability of the concept of one world. This one-world concept requires a new, positive attitude towards trade and development, a new commitment to assistance and new economic and social structures. These can be brought about with success only through the genuine display of political will, international understanding and mutual co-operation between the developed and the developing countries. In the recent past these two groups of countries have had occasion to discuss these matters, particularly at sessions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other bodies of the United Nations, but, unfortunately, such a dialogue has too often degenerated into a deadlock, if not confrontation.

91. It should also be observed that many items like shipping, insurance and reinsurance and tourism account for a very large share of the balance of payments of developing countries. However, for various reasons, the earnings of these countries from such items continue to remain negligible. The share of the developing countries in the world merchant fleet is less than 7 per cent. Similarly, the volume of insurance transactions in developing countries is still rather small. Although the United Nations, particularly UNCTAD, has for some years examined in detail the questions relating to earnings from the invisibles which have a potential to contribute in no small measure to an

improvement in the balance of payments and to the economic growth of developing countries, the results of such examination so far have not been encouraging enough.

92. The reasons for this are not difficult to find. The developed nations are still not willing enough to help and co-operate with the developing countries. They have not yet tried to any reasonable extent to meet the basic requirements of the developing countries. Such co-operation on the basis of equal partnership should take the desirable form of "give and take", fully understood and implemented by the industrially advanced countries. Here it should be emphasized that similar chronic shipping problems are being faced by many developing countries, like Thailand and some other countries in Asia, which are not yet in a position fully to develop their own national merchant fleets. They are always left at the mercy of foreign flags for sea carriage of cargo, with the result that their export trade is almost totally dependent on foreign lines. Most developing countries are also in a position of weakness in negotiating with shipping conferences either for admission into such bodies or for a reduction in the freight rates unilaterally announced and enforced by the conferences.

93. All Governments of developing countries attach great importance to shipping. It not only represents an important item of invisible export but is also an effective instrument for export promotion. It is regrettable to note that the system of maritime conferences has not yet taken into account the need of the developing countries. It is not uncommon to find that the freight rates are exorbitant and discriminatory and, in certain cases, represent more than 50 per cent of the costs of certain export products. The rates are found to be prohibitive for many products which need to be exported by developing countries. It is now high time the régime of shipping conferences introduced a new pattern and approach. Those who run the conference system must reduce or even give up the monopolistic structure and practices and thus engage in a greater degree of rethinking and readjustment. Indeed, this new pattern requires equality and mutual consultation, and there must be no unilateral decisions or inferior treatment, which have been the past practices of the conference system. It is our fervent hope that the United Nations will be able to take still more effective measures without delay to deal with these problems so that discriminatory practices in shipping will no longer be tolerated.

94. Attention should also be drawn to some other international trade problems facing poorer countries. What is really to be desired in this regard is that the developed countries should not always take the advantage of imposing damaging quotas or other discriminatory restrictions on the importation of products from developing countries. In other words, what is needed is a freer flow of trade without discrimination or barrier against the products of developing countries. In this connexion, I take this opportunity to commend Australia for being the first country to initiate what are called the tariff preferences for less developed

countries, which became effective in April 1966. This, in our view, was a step taken in the right direction.

95. There can be no doubt that aid is still of great importance and necessary for the development of poorer countries, but these countries must be offered fair and equal opportunities in all fields of aid and trade. Any form of co-operation between the developed and the developing countries should bring about benefits for both sides. The developed countries should adopt measures to discourage the uneconomic production and sale of commodities which compete with those originating from developing countries and should abolish government subsidies which introduce elements of unfair competition into normal commercial transactions, thus causing serious harm to the interests of such nations. As for the disposal of production surpluses or strategic reserves, the utmost care must be taken not to bring about a depression of international prices or adversely to affect the exports of developing countries. There can be no doubt that mutual co-operation in equal partnership, together with a genuine display of political will coupled with a willingness to recognize mutual problems and needs, can open the door to world peace and prosperity.

96. It is somewhat encouraging to note that the lessons drawn from the shortcomings of the first United Nations Development Decade are now being translated into a global strategy of development. This collective action which the whole community of nations is taking to meet the challenge of under-development will determine the kind of world to which the United Nations is dedicated. In other words, it will decide whether mankind, despite the grim realities before it, will be able ultimately to bring prosperity, stability and lasting peace to the world. It is our firm belief that the international development strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade must have its roots in a firm political commitment based on a will to co-operate. It should also be looked upon as a definite programme of action and therefore requires a timetable of activities. Without such a time-table the strategy document would lose much of its meaning. It is also incumbent upon Governments to take the action required in order to attain the goals and objectives of the Decade, thus ensuring a better and happier world for mankind. Let us all hope that the Second United Nations Development Decade which is going to be launched in a few weeks will become a decade of achievement rather than one of empty rhetoric.

97. In connexion with the economic activities of the United Nations, I should like briefly to mention that since 1954 the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East has been located in Bangkok in a building provided free of rent by the Government of Thailand to the United Nations. Up to now Bangkok has only had the status of a working site. But in April of this year, ECAFE adopted a resolution declaring Bangkok its permanent site. Then in July, the Economic and Social Council at its forty-ninth session adopted another resolution [1522 (XLIX)] approving ECAFE's recommendation to that effect.

98. Thailand has always extended its willing assistance and co-operation to the United Nations in providing suitable accommodation for offices. Whenever additional facilities were needed the Government responded positively to the request for further assistance. In 1964, additional facilities were made available to meet the growing requirements of ECAFE. And now, in order to meet the present and anticipated needs of the United Nations, the Government of Thailand has decided to make more land available for new United Nations construction. In this connexion, my Government is also prepared to render further assistance in the preparation and conduct of an architectural and engineering survey.

99. After twenty-five years of existence attempts should be initiated and vigorously pursued to streamline the procedural arrangements within the United Nations, or else the image of the Organization as the world's ineffective debating society or, worse, as a mere propaganda forum, will continue to linger to the detriment of the entire membership. Such reforms and other corrective measures would help restore the confidence of some sectors of the international community in the efficaciousness of the United Nations and would contribute to making the world body into an effective instrument for dealing with the problems of the 1970s. The United Nations must not be allowed to become a static or a stagnant body—oblivious to changing circumstances and other developments since its inception. The twenty-fifth anniversary seems in our view to be the proper occasion to rededicate ourselves to the principles and purposes of the Charter and also to exploring the possibilities of updating its machinery and adapting other institutional practices to the dynamic age and future challenges of the next quarter century.

Mr. Benites (Ecuador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

100. Mr. McMAHON (Australia): It is a pleasure for me to extend to you, Mr. President, the warmest congratulations of the Australian Government and its delegation to this General Assembly on your election to the Presidency. The distinguished part you have played in the service of your country and in the development of this Organization, notably through your authoritative study of the Charter, makes you a fitting and admirable choice to preside over this session.

101. In congratulating you I also want to express through you the thanks and appreciation of the Australian delegation for the efficient and dedicated manner in which your predecessor, Mrs. Angie Brooks-Randolph of Liberia, discharged her responsibilities as President of the twenty-fourth session.

102. As so many of my colleagues have said, this twenty-fifth anniversary session is an appropriate occasion to examine the workings of our Organization—its successes and failures, its merits and shortcomings.

103. Looking back to 1945 we should keep in mind the aspirations of the founder Members of the United Nations in San Francisco and the problems they had to solve.

104. Today, under the compulsion of circumstances and events, we must ask ourselves to what extent the United Nations has succeeded. Of paramount and immediate importance, we must ask whether we can make any contribution to improving its performance. This, I emphasize, is the greatest test of statesmanship and sincerity of our times.

105. Let us recall the conditions that existed when the Charter was signed. It was an unhappy and disturbed world in which the most destructive war of all times was still being fought; a war in which my country and many others, large and small, were still heavily involved; a war which had directly or indirectly dominated people's daily lives everywhere throughout six years of struggle against violent and tyrannical oppression. It was a more disturbed world than that which had given birth a generation earlier to the League of Nations. It was a world in which there was a passionate yearning for peace and order, for a system of rules for the orderly conduct of relations between nations, for the peaceful settlement of disputes and for the improvement of the quality of life for all mankind.

106. In this mood of hope and determination our Governments met in San Francisco. There was never much disagreement about the name to be given to the new Organization; the world-wide alliance of Powers, then within sight of final victory, had already become known as the United Nations.

107. The forging of its Charter, on the other hand, was necessarily a more difficult process. After the traumatic experience of the Second World War the nations united in war were ready enough to recognize the need for a more broadly based and more effective institution than the League of Nations, a new institution which would have to accommodate the aspirations and interests of more than fifty nations. The major Powers had differences to reconcile amongst themselves and the rights of the smaller nations were vigorously pressed, not least of all by the Australian delegation. Thus the Charter that emerged was inevitably the product of compromise, implicit as well as explicit. This should be recognized in any evaluation of the past.

108. The Charter was founded on the proposition that the major allied Powers, those which carried the heaviest burden of the war, would share the main responsibility for preserving the peace. If this concept was to be successful it had to be postulated on the continued existence among the major allies of the same unity of purpose that had carried them to the point of victory and on a common interest in maintaining world peace in the future. It was with that expectation, indeed on that condition, that the major allies were given a special position under the Charter, with rights and obligations exceeding those of all other Members.

109. Even before the Charter was signed, suspicion and discord had arisen amongst them. Succeeding years have seen an intensified conflict of ideologies and world-wide clashes of national interests. At times it even seemed that the objective was conflict and turmoil and not peace and security, and the promotion,

rather than the suppression, of armed conflict in areas of competitive interest. Those differences of outlook, interests and ideology among the permanent members of the Security Council have prevented the Council from performing the role intended for it by the Charter.

110. We can speculate about what might have happened if the Military Staff Committee, so hopefully envisaged under Chapter VII of the Charter, had been allowed to take shape and to assume the functions planned for it.

111. We might also deplore our failure to settle the question of how the costs of peace-keeping operations are to be shared equitably.

112. Having said that, we should acknowledge that we have been spared the horrors of a third world war. Undoubtedly, the basic explanation up to the present has been the rapid development of weapon technology. Another world war has been too horrible for any nation to contemplate. No one could win. The world as a whole would be certain to suffer disastrous consequences.

113. The United Nations may perhaps claim some small credit for providing a safety valve for public debate and a forum in which the great Powers have been forced to explain and justify their attitudes and actions. In its twenty-five years the United Nations has not been able to prevent a number of limited wars of the conventional type; nor has it found the answer to insidious threats to national integrity and security through the newly developed techniques of infiltration, subversion and insurgency.

114. The peace-keeping record has not, however, been wholly bleak. Korea is an illustration, even without agreement among the major Powers. In the Middle East, Kashmir, the Congo and Cyprus, United Nations forces and truce supervisory teams have in the past played a significant role in critical situations which could have grown considerably worse without their presence.

115. Despite strains, divisions and its limited record of achievement in its primary role, the United Nations has survived for twenty-five years. That indicates that many Members recognize that there is a residual or net value in the Organization and that they still hope for a future in which it will perform functions which measure up to their expectations.

116. As we look to the future, it is surely no exaggeration to say that the reputation of the United Nations and the degree of respect it enjoys among people everywhere will hinge on its performance in helping to settle disputes among nations and in keeping the peace.

117. Undoubtedly, there is room for improvement in the peace-keeping procedures of the Organization and the machinery provided for the settlement of disputes. But practical success in this peace-keeping role must depend ultimately on subjective factors—the attitudes,

intentions and honesty of purpose of the great Powers and of the individual nations concerned in particular disputes.

118. Australia has consistently supported the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations with both men and money. As early as 1947 we were one of the three members of one of the first mediation and peace-keeping missions set up by the United Nations—the United Nations Commission for Indonesia. We contributed substantial forces to the United Nations action in Korea.

119. At the present time we are making a significant contribution to peace observation and supervision in Kashmir, the Middle East and Cyprus. We will continue, as a member of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, to support efforts to formulate procedures designed to increase the effectiveness of future operations and to ensure that they are properly financed. We will continue to maintain our firm belief in the United Nations Charter and are convinced that in the faithful and devoted support of its principles lies the best hope for the future peace and progress of mankind.

120. From peace-keeping and the peaceful settlement of disputes, let me turn to the painful and difficult problem of arms control and the reduction of armaments. The constant and frightening improvement in military technology and the complexity of the problems involved in effecting balanced armament reductions make the subject of disarmament a difficult one for most to understand. This difficulty of understanding is no excuse for thinking it is an academic exercise divorced from the realities of daily living.

121. All of us know that the continuing discussions and negotiations on the control and reduction of armaments, protracted, complex and technical as they are, can vitally affect the security of all countries. Security may be indivisible, but dangers to security vary in nature and degree from region to region and from country to country.

122. The advent of the nuclear balance of terror and the knowledge of other equally horrifying weapons of mass destruction have brought home to us forcibly how vulnerable we are to the whims of scientific progress in the notoriously accident-prone hands of mankind. Surely it is right that our efforts to control armaments should concentrate in the first instance on limiting and controlling weapons of mass destruction.

123. That said, it should be added that a world-wide balance of force, if it is to be effective in containing aggression and preserving security, must include the balance of conventional as well as nuclear armaments. It is with conventional weapons that the many acts of aggression have been committed in the years since the Charter came into force, and we must unhappily expect that there will be more. To pay less attention to the threat that is familiar and traditional than to the threat that is almost unimaginable but controllable is contrary to our mutual interests and welfare.

124. I believe we can be a little encouraged by the progress that has been made in arms control and disarmament. First, Australia has signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII)*] subject to certain understandings and interpretations. We hope it will in time become a fully effective barrier against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Secondly, indications of progress in the strategic arms limitation talks between the United States and the Soviet Union also offer some hope. Thirdly, the prospect of agreement to prevent the placing of weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed is also welcome. The Australian Government hopes that the text of the draft treaty now before the Assembly¹⁵ will gain widespread support. Fourthly, there are also grounds for hope that, as a result of discussion at the conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva this year, we may be at or near the threshold of substantive progress towards supplementing and strengthening the prohibitions on chemical and biological weapons of war that already exist in the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

125. I have spoken at length about the influences that affect the balance between peace and war because the paramount purpose of the United Nations must still be to preserve peace and outlaw war and because this paramount purpose has not always been well served.

126. Let me turn now to another purpose of the Charter which can be measured by the increase in membership of the United Nations in twenty-five years. I refer to the progress from dependent status to full sovereignty and statehood of more than half of the present Members of the Organization.

127. The circumstances in which those sections of the Charter relating to dependent Territories came to be drafted in San Francisco are worth remembering. The Covenant of the League of Nations broke new ground. It introduced and put into effect in the Mandate system the novel concept that the international community held a degree of responsibility for the guidance of colonial peoples towards self-government and independence. By 1945 that concept had been strengthened and developed by the experiences of the Second World War. Self-determination for dependent Territories became the accepted goal, and was given wider and more precise expression in Chapters XI, XII and XIII of the Charter.

128. I note here that the Australian delegation at San Francisco took a particularly active part in the drafting of those Chapters, especially those sections dealing with the rights of the peoples of dependent Territories and the obligations of the administering Powers and of the United Nations towards them.

129. Since that time there have been profound and rapid changes, which are continuing. The Charter set the targets and the standards. It only remained for the metropolitan Powers to accept responsibility for the changes that inevitably had to be made. In most cases they were accepted willingly and generously.

¹⁵Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1970, document DC/233, annex A.

130. There was also a complementary responsibility for the dependent peoples themselves first to understand their opportunities and responsibilities and then work towards achieving them. In some cases freedom and national sovereignty came only after a lengthy and sometimes bitter struggle; in most cases they came more happily as a result of a rational acceptance of the situation by both sides and a peaceful and mutually satisfactory transfer of political power.

131. In this process of the development of dependent peoples to nationhood the United Nations, reflecting the liberal and humanitarian instincts of mankind, and sometimes its impatience, has played a significant part.

132. To be specific, I want to speak briefly about one dependent area of great concern to Australia, in which this process of developing is taking place rapidly. This is the Territory of Papua and New Guinea.

133. Let me describe the position there. It is the largest of the remaining dependent Territories outside the continent of Africa; it lies immediately to the north of Australia; its area is approximately 180,000 square miles, and its population totals two and a quarter million. It is a larger unit than many Members of the United Nations. Because of its exceptionally rugged terrain and the successive waves of migration that occurred over the centuries, these two and a quarter million people are divided amongst themselves by ethnic and tribal differences and also by something like 700 different languages—not different dialects, but different languages. It is this fragmented society that is now drawing together into an identifiable nation.

134. My delegation reports each year to this Assembly about the progress made and the difficulties encountered during the preceding twelve months. The proclaimed policy is to ensure the exercise by the people of the Territory of their inalienable right to self-determination. We are now doing, and will continue to do, all we can to prepare the people of the Territory for the termination of dependent status and their accession to full self-government and independence.

135. Next year another United Nations Visiting Mission, the seventh, will go to the Territory and will be able to see for itself the striking progress that has been made since the visit of the last Mission in 1968.

136. Earlier this year I had the honour to lead the Australian delegation to the meeting of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, which recommended that the Territory of Papua and New Guinea be admitted as one of its associate members, a recommendation which has since been unanimously approved by the Economic and Social Council at its forty-ninth session [*resolution 1523 (XLIX)*].

137. The Australian Government thinks that this approval and other activities, such as participation in the South Pacific Conference, are recognition of the growing national identity of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea and further steps along the road towards self-determination.

138. I should like now to range northward and westward from New Guinea into Asia. Let me say that I presume to speak about the general situation throughout Asia because of the great importance to this Organization of events there and their particular importance to Australia.

139. In our view, to judge from the agenda of this twenty-fifth session, Asia receives less attention than it is entitled to from the General Assembly. I would like to think that this was a good sign; that a peaceful and well-ordered Asia offered few serious problems to the international community. Up to a point this may be true. In the view of my Government it is fair to say that apart from the few serious and easily identifiable major problems, there is evidence throughout eastern, south-eastern and southern Asia of a measure of stability, vitality and economic progress that we would not have dared to hope for twenty years ago.

140. Of these major problems China is critical. We shall again be considering the question of the representation of China in the United Nations. Australia, situated at the edge of the Pacific Ocean adjacent to South-East Asia, is more concerned with its long-term relations with mainland China than most Members of this Organization. We see plenty of evidence to our north of how much the enormous size, power, and influence of mainland China intrude into and affect the interests and the calculations of smaller nations. My predecessors in office, when speaking to the Assembly, have emphasized that the problem of China's relations with its immediate neighbours and with the rest of the world outside Asia is much greater and more complex than the question of Communist China's admission to this Assembly.

141. We see as clearly as anyone the need for an accommodation with the Peking régime, and we are as anxious as anyone that an accommodation be achieved. But we constantly run up against the mirror image, in its conduct of its external relations, of the ruthlessness and harshness which have been a feature of the present régime's treatment of its own people. Above all, we are conscious of the need for a settlement of the future of the people of Taiwan that takes full account of the wishes of 14 million people, more than the population of Australia and of the majority of Member countries of the United Nations. The interests and welfare of 14 million people are not to be treated as an incidental consideration in some package deal. The Assembly has a grave responsibility to ensure that the status and the rights of these people are protected and guaranteed.

142. It is sometimes claimed that the admission of Communist China to the United Nations will act as a catalyst in opening the way to better relations between China and that part of the international community from which Peking seems to have chosen to isolate itself. We do not at present share this optimistic view. On the other hand, we suppose that the adoption by Communist China of a more reasonable attitude towards international society as a whole, and towards the purposes and principles of the Charter, would facilitate its entry into this Organization.

143. I turn next to the gravest problem now facing us in Asia. It is an unhappy reflection of the failure of the United Nations in its primary role of keeper of the peace that the Viet-Nam situation has never been properly debated here, let alone considered as to possible action. Everywhere else, of course, the Viet-Nam war has been for five years and more one of the great divisive issues of our time. It is understandable that the world's conscience should have revolted against the fearful losses and hardships that the people of Viet-Nam have suffered almost without interruption since well before the United Nations came into being. It is less understandable, in the view of the Australian Government, that the people of South Viet-Nam—who are manifestly the victims of aggression in its most naked and ruthless form—and the elected Government of South Viet-Nam—which has demonstrated beyond doubt that it reflects the wishes of the great majority of the people—should have had to undergo so much biased and totally unfair criticism.

144. The outrages they have been compelled to endure from their internal and external aggressors, acting in complete defiance of the Geneva Agreements of 1954, need to be precisely stated. Intimidation, kidnapping, extortion and assassinations have the same meaning in anyone's language, whatever devices are employed to present them under the guise of "liberation".

145. The day may come—we all hope it will—when the people of North and South Viet-Nam can be reunited. In the meantime there is a well-marked boundary between the north and the south. Both halves of Viet-Nam could begin to achieve the economic stability and well-being of some of their neighbours if only the régime in Hanoi could be persuaded to give up its hopeless struggle and withdraw behind the demilitarized zone.

146. The spill-over of the Viet-Nam conflict into neighbouring Laos and Cambodia is well enough known to this Assembly, at least in general terms. The representatives of those countries will, I am sure, describe it in detail.

147. Australia has been active throughout the past decade in helping the Government of Laos to maintain a stable economy and thereby to resist the familiar pressures and encroachments of an alien and unwanted ideology.

148. More recently the same kinds of pressure have been brought to bear on Cambodia. There the North Viet-Name aggression was a blatant violation of the country's neutrality and independence. In May of this year the Australian Government took part in a regional conference of Foreign Ministers held in Djakarta to consider this enlarged threat.

149. That meeting of Foreign Ministers was a constructive initiative by the Asian countries most directly concerned to try to ensure respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and neutrality of Cambodia. The collective view of that meeting was subsequently com-

municated accurately and forcefully to the Secretary-General, to the Governments of the major Powers and in a number of other capitals by three selected envoys from the group.

150. I sincerely hope that the General Assembly will recognize this as a valuable regional initiative that is not only provided for but encouraged under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

151. A great deal has been said, and more is bound to be said in the course of this Assembly, about the situation in the Middle East. Emotions are running high as a result of difficulties that have impeded the United States effort to restart peace talks and because of the recent series of criminal acts against civil aircraft and their passengers. The present situation is extremely delicate. In these circumstances I do not believe that any more detailed comments by me at this stage would be helpful.

152. Let me turn to one other topic. In the last twenty-five years the world has seen tremendous progress in the physical sciences and in industrial technology. These advances in science and technology will bring great benefits to mankind. They can also produce major side effects, often of a harmful kind.

153. An international organization like this, concerned with the maintenance of peace and security and the promotion of international economic co-operation and the raising of living standards, must concern itself continuously with these developments. In our view, the United Nations has a significant and urgent responsibility to assist in the application of science and technology to national development in the most constructive and beneficial way. Conversely, we must do all in our power to minimize the harmful effects of technological change.

154. The United Nations has a related responsibility, equally important, to devise an acceptable framework of international law in which the development of science and technology can proceed in those spheres beyond the conventional limits of national jurisdiction. At present the pace of such development is threatening to outstrip the capacity of international lawyers to devise such a framework.

155. It is a matter of regret that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has not been able to negotiate a convention on liability for damage caused by space objects. Australia, with most other countries, has argued strongly in favour of a convention that would provide certain, prompt and equitable compensation for the victims of space damage. This remains an area in which technology is moving dangerously far ahead of the law.

156. Advances in science and technology have also created a need for international legal action in regard to the seas and the sea-bed. The problems involved are urgent, comprising both the review of old concepts and the development of new ones. The substantive decisions that must be made will be important for

Governments and their peoples and for the international community at large.

157. Those who are responsible for taking these decisions must bear in mind that the system or systems they devise will have to deal equitably with differing and often competing national and international interests if they are to gain widespread acceptance. The alternative to coherent multilateral action with respect to the problems of the seas and the sea-bed could well be an unmanageable situation.

158. Of all the consequences of the introduction and intensive application of new developments to science and technology none has given rise to wider concern than their effects upon the human environment. Our natural surroundings are being increasingly recognized as an irreplaceable part of our heritage. The problems of pollution have arisen in their starkest form in the highly industrialized countries, and it is to be hoped that those countries where pollution of the environment has not yet reached the same crisis point will be able to profit from the lessons learned elsewhere.

159. Australia's own situation, where the noxious by-products of industrial development are as much a subject for debate and action as the need to develop our natural resources, puts us in a particularly good position to share with all regions of the world the fruits of our experience in coping with man's environment. As a basis on which a contribution can be made to help solve this problem the Australian Senate recently appointed a Select Committee to report on water pollution. The report has been completed and consideration is now being given to the most appropriate method of preventing further pollution.

160. We do not need to be reminded that this year is not only the twenty-fifth anniversary of this Organization but also the first year of the Second United Nations Development Decade. We in Australia understand how fervently the developing countries want the Second Development Decade to succeed. It is in this spirit that our representatives have participated in the various United Nations and other forums which have been discussing the preparations for the Second Development Decade over the past two years, and particularly the aid programmes.

161. Three weeks ago I made an extensive review before the Australian Parliament of our policies of assistance for the developing countries. I reaffirmed our position at last week's ministerial meeting in Tokyo of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

162. We have long thought that the only valid test of a country's approach to development assistance is its performance and its deeply felt desire to be helpful. We believe that Australia's record of performance compares well with that of others. Our aid to developing countries increased substantially during the 1960s, and I have recently been able to inform the Australian Parliament that it will again increase significantly in the first year of the Second Development Decade.

163. The budget for 1970-1971 provides for \$US 200 million of official development assistance—that is, assistance under the direction or control of Government. It does not include private capital flows, which are outside our jurisdiction and competence. Mostly, this assistance will be in the form of grants carrying no burden of interest or repayment. This will be an increase of 11 per cent over the previous financial year. Of this amount, \$60 million is appropriated to Asian countries—an increase of 14 per cent over the previous year.

164. I have also recently announced important new plans regarding Australia's intentions to assist, in particular, Indonesia, Cambodia and South Viet-Nam.

165. There is one other aspect of our aid programme that I want to mention. We want to ensure flexibility in any statement of aims for the Second Development Decade that may be adopted this year by the Assembly. The reasons are clear. Conditions in the various developing countries are different and require different treatment. Donor countries also face a variety of conditions, and these must influence the commitments they can make.

166. In the view of my Government there has been a tendency, especially here at the United Nations, to concentrate on the gross amount of aid rather than the quantity of official aid and the quality and effectiveness of economic aid. Thus there has been too much preoccupation with percentage targets and dates for reaching them. I have reaffirmed Australia's support for an aid target for donor countries of 1 per cent of gross national product, as defined by resolution 27 (II) of the second session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,¹⁶ which specifically acknowledges the position of capital importing countries like Australia. It is essential, however, not to let debate about the timing and level of targets distract attention from the over-all need for donors to increase the amount of their total aid and particularly their official development assistance.

¹⁶*Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Second Session*, vol. I and Corr.1 and 3 and Add.1 and 2, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.II.D.14), p. 38.

167. I conclude by returning to the present condition of the United Nations and to the faults and merits most of us see in it. Like most large institutions, it threatens to become a prey to bureaucratization. There is a growing danger of rigidity in its proceedings; it threatens to be submerged under an accumulation of paper; committees and sub-committees continue to proliferate and duplication of effort seems to increase.

168. It is a far cry from the day when the late David Owen set up the Secretariat with a desk, a chair and no telephone. Mere survival of the hectic pressures of the three months of a General Assembly session is an achievement in itself. There is a tendency to regard every United Nations resolution as an end in itself and not as a means to an end. In all this there is much room for improvement.

169. It is not basically the Charter that is at fault, though we in Australia would be receptive to change in the Charter if it was thought necessary. We must look elsewhere. Our distinguished Secretary-General, speaking in San Francisco on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing ceremony, called eloquently on all Member States to "give the Charter a chance", to give it a go and let it succeed.

170. The Foreign Minister of Brazil, in his thoughtful address which opened this debate [*1841st meeting*], reminded us that, with all its shortcomings and frustrations, the United Nations is the only forum in which we can still opt for life, peace and development. As he said, let us use the Organization and let us apply the Charter. We should take this advice to heart.

171. Finally, and above all, we must not lose hope in the United Nations. We must not let ourselves drift into cynicism. We should remember at all times the late Dag Hammarskjöld's statement:

"It is not the Soviet Union nor indeed any other big Powers who need the United Nations for their protection; it is all the others. In this sense the Organization is first of all their Organization."

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.