

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records



COMMEMORATIVE SESSION
14 to 24 October 1970*

**1865th
PLENARY MEETING**

Wednesday, 14 October 1970,
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda item 21:	
Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (<i>continued</i>)	
Speech by the Honourable Mitchell W. Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada.....	1
Speech by Her Royal Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, Chairman of the delegation of Iran and Personal Envoy of His Imperial Majesty	4
Speech by General Ernesto Montagne, Prime Minister of Peru	5
Speech by Mr. Christian Palamas, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Greece	7
Speech by Mr. Sylvestre Nsanzimana, Minister of International Co-operation of Rwanda	8

President: Mr. Edvard HAMBRO (Norway).

AGENDA ITEM 21

Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT: We are gathered here to reaffirm our faith in the United Nations Charter and to rededicate ourselves to making its principles a living reality.
2. We meet at a solemn moment with the world still beset by grave dangers. Our thoughts turn first to peace and what we must do to strengthen it. The United Nations is a generation old. Most persons now living have no direct knowledge of the universal ordeal from which it was born. We must ensure that such an experience remains forever foreign to them, to their children and to their children's children.
3. The guns are still heard in some parts of the world, and thousands tend their wounded and mourn their dead. We must seek to extend the writ of peace to all lands. Peace means more than the absence of war: the nations of the world must live together as friends. A declaration that will come before us proclaims this very truth.
4. Along with peace, justice and progress make up our anniversary theme. Let us never forget that millions of human beings are still living in starvation and misery, that millions are still denied their fundamental rights. Let us give a strong fresh impulse to our work, designed to bring a better and more dignified life to all men.

5. The world will be listening to what we say and watching what we do during our commemorative session. May our words and especially our actions at least cast a ray of hope on the future, to the discomfort of the prophets of doom.

6. Let us foster all that unites us and not that which divides us. Let us give the world cause to say: These were dedicated men. They did not pose and postpone but strove humbly and honestly to lighten the afflictions that weigh so heavily on mankind.

7. I give the floor to the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, His Excellency The Honourable Mitchell W. Sharp.

8. Mr. SHARP: Canada is honoured to open the debate at this commemorative session, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It is traditional at a time of celebration to look back to the past, forward to the future, to pause and reflect. This quarter-century mark in United Nations history provides the opportunity for self-examination. The need for self-examination arises from deeper and graver causes.

9. Throughout the world there is deep dissatisfaction rooted, I believe, in a profound uneasiness that has seized peoples everywhere—uneasiness about a world wracked by bloody conflict, uneasiness about economic prospects, uneasiness about the quality and meaning of human life, uneasiness about the health of the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil that gives us sustenance.

10. The dissatisfaction of which I speak is not limited to any group of nations. It transcends the clash of ideologies, respects no barriers between east and west, between north and south. It is felt in developing countries, in countries that are technologically advanced, by nations represented here and by those as yet without representation. Dissatisfaction is most clearly to be seen among the young, the oppressed, the alienated and the poor; yet it is to be found increasingly among people in the prime of life, people who enjoy material success. It affects the leaders as well as the led.

11. We are facing a broad crisis of confidence between people and the institutions they have created. Governments, judicial systems, places of learning, organized religion—all the great constants of civilized life are being questioned. And the way they are responding seems often to add to the dissatisfaction. The relevance of institutions, their competence, their

* The 1865th to 1870th, 1872nd to 1879th and 1881st to 1883rd meetings contain the speeches made during the twenty-fifth anniversary commemorative session.

usefulness, their very purpose have been brought into doubt.

12. In this place, at this time, it is dissatisfaction with the United Nations that we must consider. It does not stop at the threshold of this hall. It is felt, I am sure, in every delegation seated here today. As we look out at the world we see little cause for comfort, less reason for congratulation and no justification for complacency. And yet much has been achieved.

13. In the dark days of the Second World War, while fighting for their lives, the leaders of nations created a concept of a world organization and a world order that would bring peace and security, prosperity and dignity to mankind. The founding nations at San Francisco in 1945 made a leap of the imagination unique in man's history. In the midst of chaos and misery they determined that order must prevail, they turned their backs on darkness and death and struck out towards a future of light and of life. The Charter was a remarkable achievement; it still is.

14. Within a few years the world found itself divided by what we called the cold war. That was the first great test for the United Nations; and it survived. In the days of the cold war the great United Nations family of agencies came into being and embarked upon the supreme task of bettering the conditions of life on earth, a task they still pursue with energy and dedication.

15. Even in the most anxious days of the cold war the nations came together here. If there was little meeting of minds, at least there was contact. If we failed to decide issues, at least we debated them. Out of confrontation came communication. And we did certain things: local conflicts which could have escalated into world war were contained; co-operative financial and trading arrangements, basic to world prosperity now and in the future, were negotiated; arms control measures, the subject of mounting world concern, were given effect in a series of United Nations treaties; as new nations came on the scene the need for international development assistance was recognized and acted upon; colonialism, identified as incompatible with human dignity, was hastened towards its end, frequently with United Nations assistance; and the elimination of racial discrimination, clearly recognized as intolerable, became a primary objective. Those are some of the major accomplishments, tangible, constructive and plainly visible.

16. What about the subtler forms of United Nations achievement? Within these walls we have engaged as nations in an ever more sophisticated exchange of views, in ever more fruitful negotiation of issues. Nations met here, as we are meeting today, in a continuing conference. The whole concept of diplomacy went through a profound change: from narrow, formalized negotiations carried on by an *élite* bureaucracy, we moved to a broad interchange of ideas involving whole nations and their leaders. The right of small nations to be heard even as great Powers negotiate has been enshrined in this Organization.

17. Why then the dissatisfaction, the sense of short-coming, the uneasiness about the United Nations? I am suggesting four major factors, what I would consider the root causes; there are undoubtedly others.

18. Perhaps the first is to be found in the disparity between the high hopes of 1945 and the slow progress made during the past quarter century. We had a right to high hopes in 1945 because so much seemed possible then.

19. In the recorded history of man there have been many years of great moment, but few surely of such significance as 1945. Has there been any other year in which were manifest such widespread relief and determination for a better future? Has there been any other year in which occurred events of such vivid horror, such appalling evidence of man's capacity to produce his own catastrophe? Could any other year claim all the elements of a present hell and all the ingredients for a future heaven? In 1945 man attained a kind of maturity. Not since he first fashioned rough stone tools had man possessed the knowledge and the ability to answer virtually all his needs. Not since he first associated with others in local tribes had mankind conceived the institutional framework to conduct his affairs effectively and peacefully. Not since man first struck down his brother in rage had he been able to destroy not just his neighbour and his enemy but the whole human race. For centuries these human capacities had been the subject of dreams or nightmares by scientists and inventors, by poets and philosophers, by warriors and madmen; but none was within the grasp of man prior to 1945. Then in a few blinding weeks of inspiration, revelation and terror, man held them in his hands.

20. This week we have an opportunity to reflect on our use or our misuse of that knowledge and ability in the years since the Charter was signed. In doing so we shall be well advised to avoid putting too much blame either on the United Nations as an organization or on its Charter. The Charter is a remarkable political attainment. The Charter introduced into the world a minimum standard of conduct, a floor through which no State was to descend. The Charter was never intended as a ceiling on the good citizenship of nations. The failure of the United Nations so far to fulfil the promise of 1945 is no excuse for States not to live up to the spirit as well as the letter of the Charter. For it is Member States which are charged with the obligations of the Charter. It is Member States which retain the primary responsibility for action or inaction by this Organization. That responsibility is not diminished simply because the United Nations is not yet as effective as the San Francisco Conference hoped it would be. All Member nations share some of the blame for this Organization's weaknesses, just as we can all take part of the credit for its strengths.

21. A few moments ago I spoke about the coincidence, in 1945, of political achievement and scientific advance. Surely the great paradox of that time was that the founding nations failed to realize that the nu-

clear age had begun. This seems all the more incomprehensible today when we realize that the Charter and the bomb were being put together at the same time.

22. Science in the past quarter century has so far outstripped politics that all our political institutions, above all the United Nations, have seemed less and less relevant. How else can we now look upon disarmament discussions in the 1950s for example, when bigger bombs were bursting in the atmosphere and threatening us with radiation hazard? While we struggled with age-old earthly ills—hunger, disease, illiteracy—science shot Sputnik into orbit in 1957 and a dozen years later sent men to the moon and back. How could we hope to deal effectively with the gap between rich and poor nations when science was clearly running away from us all?

23. If Governments exhibit in the next 25 years the same indifference they have shown in the past, science will either destroy man or enslave him. It is sheer fantasy to believe that science, inevitably, is in man's service. Today man's ability to continue to control his own destiny is far less certain than it appeared in 1945.

24. Without suggesting for a moment that we should seek to stifle the scientific mind, I believe we must find ways of putting science and technology to work for the good of man, for the improvement, not the impairment, of the human condition. We do this within our national boundaries by re-examining existing arrangements or by devising new means, whichever way provides the most effective results. We must with the same foresight and vigour do so in the international sphere to check the bad effects of the relentless pursuit of science, to direct its powerful force for good into co-operative action for the benefit of us all.

25. The United Nations is not unaware of this need. It has begun to act in fields such as communications, transportation, outer space, the environment and the peaceful uses of the sea-bed.

26. A third big factor that feeds dissatisfaction is that the United Nations has often appeared to be rudely by-passed, or shamelessly made to stand aside, while major world events were unfolding, while grave crises were erupting, particularly in the field of peace and security. Berlin, Viet-Nam, Czechoslovakia leap to the mind, but they are only the most obvious examples. Other critics have found it incredible that this Organization can claim any standing in today's world when it has excluded for decades representatives of nations forming very substantial segments of the world's population.

27. Finally, I suggest that some of the aims, interests and values which in 1945 had very great appeal and support in this Organization are no longer the ones that dominate here, nor those that motivate nations and individuals now.

28. The preoccupations of the United Nations, once those of a membership predominantly white and of

European origin, have shifted radically and rapidly with the Organization's changing racial and regional composition. Yesterday, we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This year marks the beginning of the Second United Nations Development Decade. Our attention has been shifting too, perhaps not quickly enough, to meet new demands and expectations in a rapidly evolving world situation. All these changes are bound to be unsettling and to produce a kind of dissatisfaction. We have to adjust to them, as an Organization, as individual Member States, as nations.

29. We may not have developed fully the reflexes of mind and mechanism needed for quick change; we are learning, I have no doubt, but whether fast enough one cannot be so sure. I ask you: how much time do we have?

30. I have sought to launch our discussion on a course that is positive and constructive, away from the temptations of self-congratulation, mutual recrimination and, above all, of apathetic indifference.

31. If we who are Members of this United Nations have the will to do so, we can accomplish anything we want: our Charter aims, the conservation of that fragile balance of nature on which we all depend for survival, the aspirations of people everywhere for a quality of life that is fit for human beings, not for cold computerized robots, nor the lifeless masses of Orwell's 1984, but for warm and vital human beings, the people for whom the Charter speaks.

32. Wherever we come from, whatever our constitutional forms, whatever credentials we hold, we are all here representing people. It is they who are the ultimate beneficiaries of what the United Nations does, and the victims of what it leaves undone.

33. Our peoples now all know this, all around the globe. They can, via satellite and the other marvels of instant communication, watch us now, all the time. They will know if we fail them, why and how. For people everywhere know today what they expect of us, even if they cannot always articulate their views or formulate their ideas. They want to have done with wars and weapons, to have done with social discriminations and economic disparities, to reduce hate and hypocrisy, pomp and pretence in human relations.

34. Acting in concert we can, I believe, accomplish whatever we set out to do provided our will to succeed is sustained and strong. We can find ways to reduce the tensions which threaten to erupt into world conflagration. We can find some equilibrium so that expanding populations will get an equitable share of the world's resources. We can reduce armaments in a manner which does not threaten the security of any country. We can deal with disparities that set the poor nations at odds with the rich. We can remove or reduce the ugly threats to our human environment.

35. These problems spill over national and regional frontiers with no hope of effective unilateral control.

But even if concerted action should evade our grasp for the moment, for reasons which are not entirely within our control, we cannot and should not seek to evade our responsibility either as individual Members or groups of Members. Our Charter obligations remain intact and nothing prevents us from discharging them unilaterally.

36. Individual nations can refrain from using force and violence in international relationships. They are not compelled to devote ability and resources to produce nuclear weapons and others equally capable of mass destruction. It is possible for them to allocate increasing amounts of resources to economic development and social progress, to environmental control measures, to improving the quality of life. Individually we can act within national boundaries to ensure that the dignity of man is preserved.

37. If every nation represented here today does its utmost to put and keep its own house in order and to bring about friendly relations with other States, part of the great task of the United Nations will have been accomplished. If as Member nations we come here in the knowledge that everything we can do within our own jurisdictions has been done—and I do not suggest that any nation here today can make that claim—we will find fewer problems to face and those that remain, less difficult.

38. I speak today for Canada, and I pledge Canada to full support of the United Nations in the years to come. We cannot, together or separately, solve all of mankind's problems at once. Dissatisfaction and unease will remain part of the common human experience. If we have the will, the courage and the patience we can make greater progress in the next quarter century than in the last, so that the youth of our time, and of times to come, may receive from us a United Nations equal to its tasks, and a world in which they, in their time, can build upon the foundation we have laid.

39. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Her Royal Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, Chairman of the delegation of Iran and Personal Envoy of His Imperial Majesty.

40. Her Royal Highness Princess ASHRAF PAHLAVI (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour as Personal Envoy of my brother and Sovereign to read the message which he has addressed on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations:

“A quarter of a century has elapsed since the historic moment when, in enthusiasm and hope, the Charter of the United Nations was drafted for the purpose of ensuring the security and well-being of the whole of mankind. It is, indeed, a brief period in the life of an international organization such as ours, yet it is sufficient to enable us to ask ourselves whether the work it has done has been effective.

“While 25 years of continuous efforts have revealed obvious limitations, we must none the less

not lose sight of many concrete achievements. The danger of a total and nuclear war has been reduced, but peace remains precarious. Most colonial peoples have acceded to independence, but colonialism has not yet been completely uprooted. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights cast a new light over the globe, but racism continues to exist here and there. International co-operation for development has certainly progressed, but the gap between the wealthy countries and the others has widened. The scientific and technological revolution opened up unexpected vistas for progress, but disease, hunger and ignorance are spreading their threatening shadow over several broad continents.

“The balance-sheet is more positive than appears at first glance. Indeed, the concept of co-operation has tended to replace that of conflict thanks to a movement the slow pace of which in no way justifies doubts as to the expected results. The only question is how to bridge more rapidly the gap between the principles of the Charter and their implementation by the international community, in order to restore man's confidence in the virtues of this Organization.

“In this connexion it is up to the Governments of the world to set against the pessimism of today their renewed readiness to respect their obligations under the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations, especially to refrain from the use of force to settle conflicts, to observe the laws of mutual assistance and tolerance, to bring about justice and freedom, to co-operate towards the eradication of poverty and war. In other words, a closer reconciliation between national policies and the objectives laid down in the Charter will make it possible more easily to achieve the ultimate aims of the international community. In planning their national policies Member States must take into account the decisions and recommendations collectively adopted within the Organization and ensure that their conduct conforms to the obligations and spirit of the Charter.

“The United Nations has in the past contributed to decolonizing the world and to helping nations achieve their independence. The number of Member States is two and a half times greater than it was in 1945. This expansion must continue until we achieve universality so that the Organization encompass all peace-loving nations which undertake to respect the Charter. Only then will it be able to speak with authority in the name of all the peoples of the world.

“The Organization must also make a greater effort to help developing countries to bridge the gap separating them from the industrialized nations. In this connexion, the complete achievement of the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade must command its attention at all times.

“For its part, Iran has always sought to apply the principles of the Charter at home as well as in its relations with other countries. We have stated our position in favour of the universality of this

Organization. Within the framework of our foreign policy we have established relations of friendship and close co-operation with many countries, even when their political and social structure was different from ours. We have taken the initiative of speeding up, on the international level the campaign against illiteracy. We have suggested the creation of an international corps of volunteers to enable youth to take part in the development of mankind as a whole.

“Of course, our experience is not unique. We mention it because we are more familiar with it and because we think it proves that every State, if it wants to, can contribute positively to the creation of a better world. We firmly believe that by working together along these lines, we shall be able to make of the United Nations the instrument of peace, justice and progress which its founders envisaged in 1945.”

41. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is His Excellency General Ernesto Montagne, Prime Minister of Peru.

42. General MONTAGNE (*interpretation from Spanish*): As a representative of the Revolutionary Government of Peru, I participate in this commemorative session, which is undoubtedly of deep historic significance, since it recalls the tragic circumstances which gave birth to the Charter of San Francisco. At that time the United Nations was the great hope of mankind and this Organization was considered to be the indispensable instrument whereby, from the rubble of the war, a better world might be built in which humanity, by means of co-operation among nations, would be freed from the scourges of hunger, poverty, disease and ignorance and also from the fear of war by a system which would guarantee international peace and security.

43. With the same faith with which we signed the Charter and with equally firm adherence to its principles and the noble purposes and objectives it set for itself, Peru now is here to reaffirm its commitment as a peace-loving, law-abiding country.

44. Twenty-five years ago, after a world-wide holocaust, 50 representatives of as many nations met in San Francisco to prepare the Charter of a general organization that would maintain international peace and security.

45. That was the first step towards what was felt might be total and lasting peace, and a hopeful world saw in this newborn Organization the creation of the greatest and most effective of international instruments.

46. The post-war era, through which the United Nations has lived in the 25 years of its existence, has been a painful competition between a legal structure—with all its limitations and weaknesses—and the growing destructive potential wielded by the super-Powers.

47. At this commemorative session, we must ponder, from a realistic standpoint, the role played by our

Organization in the quarter century that has elapsed and decide upon the collective direction that its Member States should follow if they sincerely wish to correct the flaws and errors of the past and lead this Organization to its operational peak and towards total effectiveness in the fulfilment of its main purpose, namely, the maintenance of peace and security.

48. Whereas the League of Nations did not prohibit the right to go to war, the United Nations was a final commitment among Member States to proscribe the use or the threat of force and placed the means of dissuasion from aggression in the hands of the system of collective security set up in the San Francisco Charter.

49. We must admit that although we have avoided or averted some international conflicts through this system of collective security, this same system is seriously weakened because the main problems which constitute a threat to international peace and security are not under its control, but are left to the caprice of power politics which are gradually undermining the prestige of the Organization. Obvious proofs of this grave omission are the conflicts in Viet-Nam and the Middle East.

50. The provisions for general and complete disarmament and the efforts made in that direction are linked to collective security. In this field, so far no substantial progress has been achieved to avoid the arms race among the great Powers, thereby exorcising of the spectre of a nuclear war.

51. The play of international politics within the Organization has created a dangerous rivalry between the great Powers on the one side, whose actions and decisions systematically side-step the very system they created in San Francisco and which granted them the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and on the other side, the third world, which endeavours to establish true peace and a universal international order not dependent on power politics nor on the balance of terror, but on harmony grounded in the political, social and economic aspects of co-operation among all the Member States of the Organization.

52. The existing system in the United Nations does not confer upon the international community the right of all its members to participate freely and actively in the political decision-making in accordance with the principle of the equality of States; on the contrary, some countries, because of their potential, are in a predominant position, whereas the great majority are denied this legitimate right. If the international community were to participate as it rightfully should, the Organization would overcome its present ineffectiveness and would obtain universal compliance with all its decisions, which would give it the full exercise of its authority and permit the implementation of those decisions.

53. Universal participation, in this sense, projected over the whole international community would have

as its pivot that co-operation and solidarity among all States which would give rise to a new type of peace, capable of barring the application of force or the exercise of power.

54. Peru is convinced that the strengthening of international peace and security is the very *raison d'être* of the United Nations and must therefore be the fundamental and constant concern of our Organization. It is for this reason that during the present session the Peruvian delegation has joined with those countries of the Latin American group that enjoy the same tradition of observance of the principles of the Charter, in the preparation of a draft resolution concerning measures for the strengthening of international security [A/C.1/L.517].

55. International peace and security cannot be strengthened without the promotion of and respect for human rights, and without the elimination of the immense inequalities that exist between the developing and the developed countries.

56. Peru, which has promulgated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a national law, here wishes to reiterate its rejection of the ominous policies of *apartheid*, of racial and religious discrimination, as well as the failure to recognize the right of self-determination and independence of peoples still under the colonial yoke.

57. The efforts made by the United Nations to promote human rights and to do away with inequalities between the wealthy and poor nations led to concerted action, when the Members of the United Nations planned the First United Nations Development Decade. Unfortunately, those objectives not only were not achieved, but were not even made adequately so that the peoples of the industrialized countries would at least feel morally compelled to participate in the first Development Decade through the adoption of concrete measures of international co-operation.

58. Now, 10 years later, we start a new decade, but without having drawn experience from the failure to achieve the results of the first Decade. At this time, the Revolutionary Government of Peru cannot fail to indicate what it regards as the two determining factors that frustrated the first decade and might well dash the hopes placed in the decade that we are now beginning.

59. The first factor is the lack of political will on the part of the majority of the industrialized countries to eliminate the relationships of economic dependence that exist between them and the developing nations. The second factor standing in the way of economic and social development is the delay in the carrying out by the developing countries themselves of the domestic structural changes.

60. The United Nations cannot be held responsible for the fragmentary fulfilment of international economic co-operation, since this failure in implementation is the lamentable consequence of the present state of trade relations among Member States.

61. We cannot adequately commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations if we accept a strategy for the decade that will even further increase the present economic dependence of the developing countries on the developed nations and that is not in keeping with the legal obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, which establish the commitment of all Member States to encourage higher standards of living, permanent employment for all and conditions of economic and social progress and development. These provisions call for a convergent international and national effort to achieve those goals. International co-operation in development is, therefore, a common responsibility and must be shared by all Members of the Organization.

62. The Government of Peru sees this common responsibility as lying between two great tenets. The first is that the primary responsibility for development falls on the countries concerned themselves. It is they that must make efforts to change their internal socio-economic structures. The second tenet is that, as a counterpart, the developed countries must abandon any policy that might hamper those internal changes and must truly co-operate to facilitate their achievement, because obviously the isolated efforts of the developing countries alone will not suffice.

63. The Revolutionary Government of Peru, true to its responsibility towards its own people and the United Nations Charter, is confronting the new decade with a co-ordinated policy of peaceful change of its socio-economic structures, in the implementation of which it has handed down a progressive series of legal ordinances together with measures of implementation, among which I must cite a just agrarian reform, a greater use of and control over our natural resources, a recent Law of Industry which will achieve social justice, reform in education and other wide reforms that are radically changing the former unjust economic and social order, one of the causes of the underdevelopment in our country.

64. These reforms are not intended to modify the traditional order superficially, while allowing everything to remain basically the same; they are, on the contrary, being carried out within the process of a true nationalistic and humanistic revolution designed not only to modify the ancient structures of our society, but to replace them by others that will be qualitatively different, and that will be the foundations of a new and different socio-economic ordering of our country.

65. The sacrifices and the domestic efforts made by developing countries, such as Peru, are being weighed by world public opinion. A feeling of international economic injustice is growing in the prosperous countries, and in some of them it has given rise to the noble rebellion of the new generations, which is the beginning of an awareness of international solidarity among men.

66. For those reasons my Government reaffirms its optimism about the future of the United Nations and will continue to contribute to its cause through the

creation in Peru of a new and just society, since the great goals of peace, justice and progress established for world-wide achievement are the same goals that the Peruvian Government is endeavouring to achieve nationally.

67. The ideals of the United Nations, its noble purposes and the high aims of Peace, Justice and Progress can be achieved only when peoples become convinced that they are all members of a single family and of a single race, the human race, capable of the most extraordinary scientific and technical feats, and when they can ensure that on our planet justice will reign over nations and men, when our peoples enjoy a worthy and secure life, and when States behave in accordance with the principles of the Charter. It is with that dedication and in that spirit that we must celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and look to the future with renewed hope and faith in the common destiny of mankind.

68. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Greece, His Excellency Mr. Christian Palamas.

69. Mr. PALAMAS (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should like, first of all, to congratulate you most warmly, in the name of the Greek delegation, on the occasion of your election as President of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. We are particularly happy to see a personality so devoted to the United Nations lead our work. Your great experience and knowledge, and your family traditions, have made this a most felicitous choice.

70. The celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations constitutes a landmark, a moment of concentration, which allows us to evaluate the past and envisage the future. This calls for soul-searching. Each one of us, each Member State, each Government, will have to ask of itself these questions: What have we done for the United Nations? What has the United Nations done for us and for the rest of the world? I will take the liberty of going into this soul-searching, very briefly, as far as Greece is concerned.

71. We must not forget the fact that the United Nations was born in the midst of suffering. Its creation was achieved through tremendous sacrifice, through blood and ruins, millions over millions of dead. It is they who deserve our first thought, they who perished so that a better world should be born. In this holocaust the share of Greece has been large indeed, too large if we take into account its population.

72. When our Organization came to be, each time it called on its Members to assist in the defence of the principles of the Charter, Greece refused neither its contribution nor the blood of its fighters.

73. By the same token, Greece is grateful to the United Nations. During the hard times it went through from 1947 to 1949, the United Nations offered its precious assistance. The Greek people do not forget it.

74. Nor do they forget that it was in this very United Nations that its voice, raised in favour of the right of self-determination of the Cypriots, found an audience and met with understanding and assistance. To this very day, the Greek and Turkish Cypriots try to solve their differences through negotiations. They enjoy the benefit of the interest of the Secretary-General as well as that of the presence in Cyprus of the peace force of the United Nations.

Mr. Ramphul (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

75. My country has close, active and permanent bonds with the United Nations. The bonds are strengthened by our total devotion to the Charter.

76. Beyond its contractual content, the Charter constitutes in its essence a message of peace, liberty and justice. It is true that, in our present-day world, peace, liberty and justice are not shared by all. Yet, however much this may be regrettable, we should not despair. The influence of the Charter is more effective than one would think. It instils its noble principles in the conscience of man as well as of nations. It constitutes the foundation of an international morality and legality. Everyone is aware of the need to prove, to the extent he can, the legitimacy of his acts by invoking the Charter. No longer does aggression dare mention its name. Where, regrettably, it still exists, it feels the need to wear a mask to penetrate into the realm of international legality even by using a false passport. It may not be much, but it is a psychological progress which shows a tendency to gain momentum with time.

77. Unfortunately, on the international level, the law of the jungle still prevails. Justice has not yet been able to smother violence. But in this field, too, we witness new signs. When violence begins to frighten violence—we already have symptoms of this—justice and law become the only acceptable alternative even for the strong, even for the powerful and the super-powerful.

78. We put our trust in the principles of the Charter as long as these principles are not turned to slogans.

79. We recognize negotiation as the best means of resolving differences we may have with others. If necessary we are ready to have recourse to international justice and arbitration, but we are opposed to the resort to force. We believe that any negotiation is preferable to confrontation. Mutual respect and reciprocity guarantee the peaceful development of international relations.

80. Until the day when respect for international justice is secured, military alliances, to the extent that they are defensive, are not contrary to the provisions of the Charter. They are instrumental in the maintenance of a balance indispensable for the safeguard of peace. This balance is profitable even to those who do not participate in these alliances. It renders non-alignment and neutrality effectively possible.

81. It is well known that the United Nations and, in particular, the great Powers, have embarked upon a series of negotiations aiming at the promotion of the gradual limitation of arms and the reinforcement of the momentum, already begun, of international *détente*. It is only when security rests on substantive and effective guarantees that the beginning of the thaw in these political groupings will be made possible.
82. In the meantime, there is no reason why increasingly improved relations should not be established between States belonging to different defensive organizations. Quite on the contrary, such relations will contribute to improving the general political climate as well as the rapprochement between governments and peoples.
83. Greece, which has already embarked upon such a course, is happy to see that relations are continually improving between itself and its socialist neighbours. Our policy of peace and good understanding has no exclusions. It is our wish that the Balkan peninsula, known in the past as having been the powder-keg of Europe, should become a haven of peace and co-operation in the interests of all.
84. Clouds are hovering over the eastern Mediterranean, the cradle of so many civilizations and the centre of so much light. We share the general apprehension over the state of affairs prevailing in the Middle East, an area close to us. For the sake of peace and of our friends, who are many in this region, we do wish that the way to a lasting and just peace will be open. Factual situations resting on violence are precarious; they constitute a danger for all. Sooner or later, they must yield to solutions which could emerge from today's realities only through negotiation carried on under the auspices of the United Nations.
85. As we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations we cannot bypass the chapter of decolonization. In this field our Organization has waged an arduous struggle for the access to independence of peoples still under foreign administration. I am glad to be able to say that Greece, from the outset, was closely linked to all action taken for implementing the right of peoples to self-determination.
86. We often speak of the developing nations. Assisting them is, indeed, the best political and human investment possible.
87. At this moment, when we try to assess the activities of the United Nations, to evaluate their effects, we should not forget the work accomplished by the specialized agencies. It is a constructive work which weaves international solidarity into a progressively closer pattern.
88. Before concluding, I wish to pay tribute, on behalf of my country, to our Secretary-General, whose great merit is recognized by all; to his outstanding assistants, as well as to all who toil for our Organization, all whose names we may not know but who deserve the praise due to the United Nations "Unknown Worker".
89. To the sceptics who are ready to accuse the United Nations on the ground that it has not succeeded in changing the world, we only say: Yes, this may be true. But the United Nations is still young, very young. And the world is already old, very old. And the old are not changed that easily.
90. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The last speaker this morning is His Excellency Mr. Sylvestre Nsanzimana, Minister of International Co-operation of Rwanda.
91. Mr. NSANZIMANA (*interpretation from French*): It is a great honour for me to represent the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Grégoire Kayibanda, at these august ceremonies celebrating the silver jubilee of our Organization.
92. I would at the outset wish to address to all representatives present the warmest greetings of the President of the Government and of the people of Rwanda, and to our Organization our best wishes for a long and effective life.
93. Since we have been invited to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of our Organization, it would not come amiss if, even briefly, we were to look at the circumstances that surrounded its birth and the main stages of its growth.
94. A mere 50 years ago, appalled at the horrors of the First World War, and weary of the arms race, the signatory States of the Treaty of Versailles created and sealed with a pact, on 10 January 1920, a body designed to develop co-operation and guarantee peace and security among nations.
95. That onerous duty was entrusted to the League of Nations, which willingly accepted it in the hope that, concerning the maintenance of peace, it would receive the support of international opinion in finding peaceful solutions to disputes and differences. That was a time when men still believed that it was sufficient to bring problems to international notice for the parties immediately to submit to friendly conciliation.
96. But very soon that belief was found to be mistaken. In fact, international opinion, on which the young League of Nations had counted, did not yet exist; and today, when it does exist, we are justified in wondering whether it is sufficiently effective to avert the dangers to peace in the world. In short, because it failed to perfect sufficiently developed machinery to maintain peace, the League of Nations was unable to avert war, a second world war more devastating than the first, and a mere 20 years after it.
97. Hence, as early as 1942, the conviction had taken root that a new organization had to be established, one that would be more capable of solving the problems of the modern world flowing from the complexity of international relations. Such a gigantic undertaking, if it was to succeed, had to be preceded by a long chain of preparatory steps.

98. The Moscow Conference held in October 1943 set forth the decision of four Powers to create a new international organization, and the most important stage in that process was the Conference of Dumbarton Oaks in September-October 1944, which was convened to define the aims, the structure, the methods of procedure and the guiding principles of the organization. Points left pending—such as the right of veto of the great Powers and the change from the Mandate System to the Trusteeship System—were debated and settled at the Yalta Conference of February 1945, which took the decision to convene the San Francisco Conference to draft the United Nations Charter. On 25 April 1945 the San Francisco Conference began its work; it met for two months, concluding with the signature of the Charter which was to come into force on 24 October of the same year.

99. From that date our Organization acquired its right as an international body and began its real existence. It experienced a whole series of crises, of which we are all fully aware. But, too well conceived to succumb to a mere childhood disease, the United Nations regained its strength in its periods of convalescence and after having gone happily through its adolescence is today preparing to be an adult—and giving us the opportunity to taste the fruits of 25 very full years.

100. We could not better celebrate our Organization's anniversary than by using its twenty-fifth birthday to repeat our oath of allegiance. It is for that reason, and in keeping with its principles, that Rwanda wishes to reaffirm here its most solemn faith in and its adherence to the doctrine of the United Nations.

101. In fact, by enshrining as a principle in our Fundamental Law the inviolability of the human person and his protection by the State, by guaranteeing to all its citizens by its Constitution of 24 November 1962 the fundamental freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and by recognizing the equality before the law of all citizens without distinction as to race, sex or religion, Rwanda has been inspired, in the ordering of relations among individuals and between the latter and the State, by the sacred principles proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

102. Similarly, in its international relations Rwanda applies the teachings of the Charter with regard to the strengthening of international peace and security; the development of friendly relations with other nations based on respect for the principle of the equal rights of all peoples and their right to self-determination; the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that peace, international security and justice are not endangered; the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Those are the very principles of the United Nations which serve as the basis for the domestic policy of my country and for our foreign policy, both ones of peace and co-operation.

103. We should ill serve our Organization if we merely praised it for its merits without calling to its attention certain criticism, well-founded or not, levelled against it during its first 25 years of existence. In fact who has not heard the United Nations accused of being a colossal organization, even a "Tower of Babel"? Some pessimists have gone so far as to say that the United Nations is incapable of functioning normally because "there are too many people in it". Such a statement can mislead no thinking person. It is true that at the outset our Organization was composed of a rather small number of Members, but nothing indicates that at that time it worked any better than it does today, when it has 127 Member States and when the only numerical limit to its membership is the number of States in the whole world.

104. Furthermore, to criticize the United Nations for having too many Members, is to blame it for having acquired one of the attributes essential to its nature, namely, the universality which can only make it more representative of the world.

105. Moreover, that fear of large numbers which flows from a vague nostalgia for the old closed club of the past is ill-attuned to the growing public view that the United Nations is not sufficiently representative. That opinion is based on the fact that certain nations have still not succeeded in being represented: some because they are divided—some because they have not as yet achieved the status of entities under international law because of foreign domination. But here again, our Organization is not to blame if for one reason or the other a country is still divided or oppressed.

106. We continue to hope that the divided States will one day find solutions of their own devising suited to the normalization of their situation and that the Territories still at present under foreign domination will harvest as soon as possible the fruits of emancipation and freedom which they have a right to expect under General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

107. Other observers, who have not given proof of their dispassion, contend that the United Nations has shown itself incapable of maintaining peace in the world. To support these assertions they cite the armed conflicts which have broken out and which still exist in the Middle East and in South-East Asia. Without underestimating the sufferings and the incalculable losses in human and material resources that are suffered by nations long afflicted by war, my delegation believes that this accusation is pure fantasy, for even if the United Nations has only partially succeeded in maintaining peace in the world, for 25 years, thanks to it our planet has not been the arena of generalized warfare.

108. But, of all these attacks, we consider the most dangerous to be the attempt to distract the Organization from its valuable work of helping to raise the standard of living of the peoples of the third world. These egoists

are trying to draw lessons from the failure of the first United Nations Development Decade in order to challenge our Organization.

109. Such an attitude can only show how far certain minds are from having understood that the great threat to world peace lies in the social and economic imbalance which is a disgrace to our century; when a quarter of mankind wallows in a life of opulence and the other three quarters, 2,600 million in fact, stagnates in poverty.

110. But all this carping seeks only the one end, the dissolution of our Organization. The manoeuvre is obvious, the more so and the more dangerous because it is levelled against an enormous, it is true, but a particularly young organization.

111. My country, for one, highly appreciates, recognizes and unreservedly supports all the actions and initiatives of the United Nations, its agencies and all the other international and specialized agencies to maintain peace and to raise the standard of living of the people in the developing countries.

112. Rwanda, which has faith in the United Nations, considers it indispensable and irreplaceable because it is a meeting ground and an organ for peaceful coexistence, justified by the need of the wealthy and poor nations alike, of the great Powers and the small nations, to work together and to live together and to achieve true international solidarity which is the only valid basis for a genuine democratization of international relations.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.