

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
 ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records



COMMEMORATIVE SESSION  
 14 to 24 October 1970\*

**1867th  
 PLENARY MEETING**

Thursday, 15 October 1970,  
 at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

Agenda item 21:	
Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations ( <i>continued</i> )	
Speech by Mr. Charles Hérou, former President of the Republic and Special Envoy of the President of the Lebanese Republic.....	1
Speech by Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, President of the United Republic of Tanzania.....	3
Speech by Mr. Gregorio López Bravo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain.....	7
Speech by Mr. Albert Bernard Bongo, President of the Gabonese Republic.....	9
Speech by the Honourable Richard A. Henries, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Special Representative of the President of Liberia.....	11

*President:* Mr. Edvard HAMBRO (Norway).

**AGENDA ITEM 21**

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

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call upon His Excellency Mr. Charles Hérou, former President of the Republic and Special Envoy of the President of the Lebanese Republic.
2. Mr. HELOU (*interpretation from French*): This twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations which we are celebrating together coincides—if we wish to have a good memory—with another anniversary which we are not celebrating: the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of an institution similar to ours, the League of Nations, which had already assigned itself some of our own objectives and made efforts to attain them, but which is now part of a dead past. The League of Nations, created in 1920, therefore 50 years ago, after the First World War, was dead long before the Second World War, that is to say, long before its official demise. It died because of its failures in the more limited conflicts which it could not prevent or resolve and because of the false and shrewd calculations of the selfishness which it thought fit to substitute for the only possible road to prosper—the road of indivisible justice and peace, a peace based on justice.
3. We look back at the past not only to count our wounds but also to dress them and heal them, to avoid the persistence or repetition of the mistakes that were made and the better to prepare and provide for the

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

future. And in celebrating today the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, a joyful occasion which should be a time of remembrance and hope, in an atmosphere both of anguish and enthusiasm, it is our misfortune and it ennobles us to know the dangers which threaten us and to face them; to know that we cannot conjure them away either by violence, escape or subterfuge, but by an honest, strict and courageous application of the principles which we have solemnly proclaimed; that we have no choice other than loyalty to our commitments or the destruction of our work and of our countries. It is our misfortune and it ennobles us, as I have said, to be called upon, all of us together, to choose between brotherhood and death.

4. To this Assembly which is working together for life, I mean for people to live in conjunction with one another, I have the honour to bring to you the friendly message of the Lebanon, a message which reaffirms for today and for tomorrow our faithful support of the United Nations, which has lasted for 25 years—since we had the honour of participating in its creation—and also reaffirms our faith in its need to exist and in the benefits of international co-operation, a broad and sincere co-operation, for the benefit of all.

5. Such a faith, the obligations it entails and the disciplines it imposes seem to us to be particularly timely on this anniversary which occurs in the midst of so many cruel uncertainties. Far be it from us to underestimate, on the one hand, the long and patient work of codifying rules for human relations which is being undertaken here; the constructive proposals to put a brake on adventures; and on the other hand, the assistance given to decolonization; the protection, or at least the international recognition, of human rights. Far be it from us to ignore the value of mutual economic, social and cultural assistance, which our Organization endeavours to extend to the world at large through its specialized agencies.

6. We wish only to indicate our confidence not so much in the texts drafted as in the spirit which brings them into being, less in technology than in the morality which inspires it, and to proclaim, with as much simplicity as force, in this as in all other fields, the prevalence of moral values and the primacy of law.

7. On the political, economic and social levels peace is the work of justice. In taking up this motto, in turn, we do so, my delegation and myself, with all the more freedom since here in the midst of you we represent a small country.

8. Far from feeling embarrassment or apprehension, we claim, on the contrary, for the small States as a

reason for confidence and pride, the privilege of having linked their fate to the destiny of law in the world, of having identified our own cause and our own security with the cause of law; thus, in our Organization, we are the most zealous pioneers of genuine and enlightened progress. The small nations are therefore aware that they can make a major contribution to the security of all others.

9. If it is the law which is in effect, according to Pascal's expression, "strengthened" by our efforts, then the numerical strength and the size of the territory of the countries which participated in them does not matter. But if it is force which is finally "justified" and which prevails in relations among nation, of which of them, however great, can it be said that it is forever protected from insecurity and aggression?

10. In this co-operation of nations of unequal power to ensure peace, the fate of the least powerful and the success of their efforts are the very criteria of the value and the effectiveness of our common task. It is natural to maintain that it is not a concession on the part of the "great powers," but an immense advantage to them, that the "small countries" co-operate with them on the basis of sovereign equality.

11. Twenty-five years of existence and work give us an opportunity to draw up an inventory and a balance-sheet. In doing so we could dwell further either on the progress achieved by or through our institution, or on the gaps as yet unfilled.

12. But what matters far more than the specific elements which are assets or liabilities, as it were, of the United Nations are the methods and the criteria on the basis of which we make our value judgements. To make such judgements, shall we compare our objectives and our means of action? Our declarations and our deeds? Our demands of others and our demands of ourselves? Twenty-five years is certainly not a long time in the history of mankind. But let us ask ourselves why these 25 years have made it possible to achieve such exploits and such extraordinary successes in science and technology, why they have been characterized by so many leaps forward in the discovery of the universe; while we move toward one another so slowly on the road to mutual knowledge, with all that knowledge means in mutual respect and love. For that is what is involved when we talk about the essential conditions for progress and well-being. Progress and well-being are achieved by a moral ascension, and on this level our balance sheet of today is and should be for each one of us, even for the greatest, even for the most powerful, an examination of our conscience.

13. This is an opportunity to repeat that it is not a greater abundance of motions and resolutions that will save us, and the entire institution with us, but in many cases a change in the very spirit which governs its functioning. Decisions are taken in which one may seek in vain any agreement with the proclaimed ideal of peace and justice. Other decisions remain a dead-letter. How can Lebanon fail to recall, as an illustration for everyone, the Palestinian tragedy which continues to

be played out on our frontiers, while on our territory we see so many desperate victims?

14. It is a cruel irony when formulas are presented as so many sins against the mind: a land which has heard so many messages of charity is being conquered, delivered to the most intransigent of racisms, to those very persons who, quite rightly, complained of the undertakings of racism and called for the compassion of mankind for their fate.

15. More than 1 million Arab refugees have been suffering a thousand deaths for years, because of the pretext that it was necessary to find a home for other refugees, and the pretext of a home thus became a metropolis for an empire.

16. It is indeed strange that in the middle of the twentieth century the armed forces of Zionism, putting napalm at the service of their interpretation of the prophets, are frenziedly building and enlarging a State, which is contrary to the course of history and is to the detriment not only of the Arabs, Christians and Moslems in Palestine, but also perhaps to the Jews throughout the world who, whatever their present homeland, hold a suspect allegiance to the Israeli homeland.

17. We certainly respect the Jews as members of the great human family because we are in favour of freedom of religion and respect for the human person. Those among our citizens who are of the Jewish religion are considered by us to be one of the Lebanese communities. But we refuse to accept an incarnation of Zionism in a State which is oppressive and expansionist. We denounce this as an enterprise of spoliation and domination, the spoliation of the most accessible neighbouring lands and the domination of the minds of persons in the most distant places.

18. In defending ourselves we have the conviction that we are defending not only our spiritual and temporal patrimony, but at the same time the values of civilization which are the common heritage of all peoples. And it is our conviction that we are at the core of a tragedy which threatens to extend step by step to all the countries of the world in the form of the most cruel confrontations.

19. The tragedy of Palestine, in its scope and gravity, has already gone beyond the Palestinian people. The occupation of Arab territories of Jordan, Syria and the United Arab Republic already jeopardizes, by way of an inexorable chain reaction, the security of our planet and the future of the United Nations. That is so because any injustice bears the seed of its own condemnation and, by perpetuating itself, provokes and keeps alive an indefinite process of disorder and destruction. And also because, through its objectives, its mystique and its violence, the enterprise of conquest, of which we are the victims and militating against which we are in the forefront, attempts to return the entire human race to a past that is gone.

20. In addressing ourselves on this occasion to the conscience and the vigilance of peoples, in sounding

the alarm for those who, perhaps without knowing it, are threatened, we believe that we are fulfilling an elementary duty of information and protection. We believe that by thus bearing witness to the truth Lebanon remains completely faithful to its mission.

21. The dangers which Israeli expansion constitutes for Lebanon we counter with our self-confidence first of all and also, I would venture to say, with the confidence and the hope which the United Nations must place in us, that is to say in the persistence of the human success which we represent.

22. Lebanon is certainly a small country, but on its small territory there are cities which are among the oldest in the history of civilization: Byblos, Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli, Beirut, Balbek and so many others, forever young in their antiquity of thousands of years. Lebanon is also—how pleasant it is to recall this here in your presence—a country blessed by God, sung by the prophets, the country of cedars and living waters extolled in the Song of Songs. It is finally and above all the country where charity is a way of life; the country of natural democracy and lived as it were spontaneously; the country where several religious communities make up—in an atmosphere of freedom, understanding and close co-operation—a national community which is harmoniously integrated in the international community.

23. As man rises, all mankind rises with him and around him. Similarly, we believe that our country, by achieving on its territory a peaceful and brotherly synthesis, succeeds in an experiment which is universal in scope. We believe that the living model of tolerance and charity which we offer gives to our support for the United Nations Charter an exceptional value, the value of approval and the value of an example. We believe that we thereby give proof, within and without, that we abide by the very principles which progressively must lead all the inhabitants of the planet earth toward the discovery of their real solidarity and an awareness of their fundamental unity.

24. Lebanon is a member of the Arab League and of the United Nations, and in these two forms of co-operation, one regional and the other international, we contribute with the same spirit. The obligations arising from this for Lebanon are of the same nature. In the Arab League we have always been staunchly in favour of all the principles of the United Nations Charter as are the other members of the League. Within the United Nations we ask that these same principles be applied to the solution of Arab problems in whatever form and sector they may arise.

25. Being as we are at the crossroads of three continents and of the great ideological movements of this century and of the past, our Arab East must also be considered not only as a "position", but as a physical, social and spiritual link which is necessary for the peace of the world. In the final analysis, what we seek by the course of justice is peace.

26. Whatever may be the difficulties assailing our Organization, whatever may be the disappointments it

has known, it cannot resign itself to lassitude or discouragement.

27. How can we forget that on our efforts depends the destiny of the universe, that the death or life of millions—indeed of thousands of millions—of persons depends on our effectiveness, that is to say, in the first place on the sincerity of our action to resolve conflicts, limit armaments, allocate to economic and social development the considerable resources now dedicated to instruments of destruction, and apply at all times and in all places the principles of the Charter. We have no right to fail, knowing what is expected of us and what awaits us should we fail.

28. It is not excessive idealism but the most realistic wisdom which makes us hope that mankind will constantly move forward to that ever more beautiful image of itself, that we call the ideal: the ideal of liberty, justice and progress.

29. Through the changes which science and technology make possible, what we hope for is the moral and material progress of the world, progress which will permit a perpetual transfiguration of the face of man, that face which, whatever its colour or features, reflects in a dazzling and most moving way God's own light.

30. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere.

31. President NYERERE: It is, I know, customary to congratulate an organization which has successfully survived for 25 years. Yet I feel that it would be a little odd for me, as the representative of Tanzania, to offer congratulations to the United Nations on its twenty-fifth anniversary. For the United Nations is not an abstract thing; nor is it governed and run by creatures from outer space. The United Nations is us—its Members. It does not exist apart from us; it can do only what we, its Members, are prepared to do, acting together. This means that to congratulate the United Nations is to congratulate ourselves, which is a rather dangerous thing to do. For self-congratulation is all too liable to lead to complacency and self-satisfaction—neither of which is, I believe, warranted at the present time in relation to ourselves as the United Nations.

32. In saying that, I do not intend to belittle that which we have achieved, nor to underestimate the importance of the fact that after 25 difficult years the United Nations still exists. And I must make it clear that I am not wishing to minimize the value of the work which has been done by successive Secretaries-General of the United Nations, and their staffs. The task of servants of this Organization has been—and still is—extremely important to world peace; it is also difficult beyond assessment for men and women whose concern is to live up to the high ideals of the United Nations Charter.

33. Therefore I would like, through you, Mr. President, to express gratitude and congratulations to the Secretary-General and his staff, both for their achievements—which are many—and for their efforts in the cause of peace and justice. In this expression of appreciation I would like to include all the members of the peace forces which are at work under the auspices of the United Nations. Their thankless task has saved many lives, and has provided more time for us—the masters of the United Nations—to deal with the problems which threaten world peace.

34. Whether we use the time thus made available to us is, of course, not within the control of United Nations employees. They remind us of what has to be done; they prepare papers for us to consider. But the consideration and the decision-making are a matter for the nation States which are Members of the United Nations. The failures—where there are failures—are ours. And it is about one of these areas—where the Secretary-General has constantly reminded us of a danger and where we have virtually failed to act—that I intend to speak this morning.

35. Before I do so, however, there is one other matter I must mention, and that is the question of membership of the United Nations.

36. It is not always easy, at a given point in time, to determine which is the real government of a country that is going through a period of revolutionary upheaval. For that reason the United Nations—I believe wisely—usually gives the incumbent Government the benefit of the doubt until the position clarifies itself. But there comes a time when we only make ourselves ridiculous by refusing to face the facts of change—whether or not we like that change. And that point has been reached and passed in relation to China.

37. The territory and people of mainland China—that is, about 3.75 million square miles, and now about 700 million persons—have been under the effective control of the Government of the People's Republic of China in Peking since 1949; that is, for 21 years. Yet they are still represented in our Councils by a so-called Government of China which in fact controls only Formosa—an island of approximately 13,900 square miles in area and with a population of about 15 million. And even this control continues only because of the intervention of an external Power.

38. How much longer does the General Assembly propose to allow this absurd state of affairs to continue? For it cannot go on indefinitely. I would like to suggest that an appropriate way of celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of this Organization would be by the admission of the People's Republic of China to its seat here. Only by such an action shall we end the situation whereby we pretend to decide questions of peace or war in the absence of the most populous nation on earth.

39. Having made that point, I want to go back to my major theme this morning, which is the question of peace or war in southern Africa.

40. Nothing could be more relevant, or more important, to this Assembly, for the purpose of the United Nations is the preservation of peace. But no one has ever suggested that this means the preservation of evil. On the contrary, the Charter of the United Nations makes it quite clear that peace can only be maintained—and should only be maintained—on the basis of “promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion”.

41. The task of the United Nations is thus much more than the prevention of violence between men and between nations. It has to promote justice and human equality. And it has to fight against the forces of injustice and inequality.

42. In particular, the United Nations has to act against the forces of racialism and colonialism, for these represent the kind of tyranny and oppression which deny all hope to men, and which therefore force them to express their humanity through violence. A man can change his religion if he wishes; he can accept a different political belief—or in both cases give the appearance of doing so—if this would relieve him of intolerable circumstances. But no man can change his colour or his race. And if he suffers because of it, he must either become less than a man, or he must fight. And for good or evil, mankind has been so created that many will refuse to acquiesce in their own degradation; they will destroy peace rather than suffer under it.

43. That is the position in southern Africa now. The *apartheid* policy of South Africa—now being imposed also in Namibia—and the colonial oppression of Portugal in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (Bissau) have goaded the people to desperation.

44. No one can say that the peoples of these Territories did not try to secure change—even some movement towards justice—by peaceful means. They tried political organization, trade union organization and tribal welfare organization. They tried petitioning their rulers and international organizations; they tried peaceful public rallies; they tried the publicizing of their wrongs through the press of the world. Indeed, perhaps they tried too long, and thus enabled the forces of oppression to strengthen themselves too much, before they finally recognized the situation for what it was. For all their efforts were met with increased oppression and an increase in the sufferings imposed upon them. But the position is now obvious. Efforts to achieve peaceful change towards justice from within the States of southern Africa have failed, and failed miserably.

45. As far as the peoples of southern Africa are concerned, therefore, the choice is now clear. They can acquiesce in their own humiliation and accept their position as third class subjects of an alien ruling Power, or they can fight for their own manhood. They are now making that choice. And they are doing it for themselves. They are choosing future life at the cost of physical death and suffering for many.

46. What free nation, or what free people, dares to tell the masses of South Africa, of Rhodesia, of

Namibia and of the Portuguese colonies that they are wrong? Who is it that can tell these people that they should acquiesce in the daily humiliation of themselves and their children? Certainly the United Nations cannot do so. For this would be to deny the basic premise of human equality, and thus to deny the basis on which we meet here.

47. No one who genuinely believes in human equality has the right to demand that the peoples of southern Africa should refrain from making war on racialism. But, if we used our strength in support of humanity, we could make their fighting unnecessary. For the United Nations—the nation States acting together—has the power to put such pressure on the States of southern Africa that change would have to come. It is a question of our will; it is a question of whether the preservation of peace by the removal of injustice is sufficiently important for us. If it is, we shall exert all pressures short of war. If it is not, then war will grow.

48. Until now, we have not acted in support of our verbal condemnations of *apartheid* and colonialism. We have given the peoples of southern Africa no hope of change. So they have begun to take up arms in their own defence—in defence of their manhood and their right to a life which is more than brutal existence. Yet so far the fighting is more a warning to the world than a real threat to the power of their oppressors—although it has certainly frightened them.

49. One thing, however, the beginning of the fighting has already done. It has forced the rest of the world—all of us here—to face up to the situation. We can no longer pretend that we have no concern with the affairs of southern Africa. Now we have to make up our own minds: whether we support the freedom struggle, whether we support the South African and Portuguese racist and colonialist governments, or whether we propose a new version of the “non-intervention” which helped the fascist régimes of Europe in the late 1930s.

50. For Africa there is no choice. We have to support the freedom fighters. Theirs is merely a continuation of the freedom struggle which has already resulted in 41 African nations being represented in this General Assembly. The national freedom and human equality for which these people are fighting are not only the same rights which the rest of Africa claimed and won. They are also the only basis on which the free States of Africa exist. For no one would claim that Tanzania, for example, has a right to be independent because of its military power, or its economic strength, or the high level of education of its people. Tanzania is independent because the United Nations and the Administering Authority acknowledged the right of its people to demand national freedom, and because they acceded to that demand when it was firmly made and clearly made.

51. If this right to self-determination existed for Tanzania, then it exists also for southern Africa. And if it does not exist for those peoples, then it does not exist for us either. This is recognized both by South

Africa and by Tanzania. It is the root cause of the conflict between the free States of Africa and the *apartheid* régime of South Africa. For *apartheid* is the modern form of slavery—and Africa can no more survive half slave, half free, than could the United States of America. Our efforts to build non-racial societies are made more difficult because of *apartheid*. Conversely, the example of our freedom and our efforts in support of human dignity are a continual irritant to the slavemasters of South Africa and Portugal.

52. That is why talk of a non-aggression treaty between South Africa and Tanzania is such nonsense. Our conflict is not that of two States quarrelling about a border or something of that nature. The conflict is about *apartheid* versus humanity and about our right to freedom. For racialism is itself an aggression against the human spirit, as colonialism is the result of past aggression against a people and a Territory. We in Tanzania, and the other peoples of Africa, have been and still are the victims of those aggressions. It is impossible for us to sign a non-aggression treaty with aggression itself. No country which considers itself a friend of Africa should try to persuade any African State to sign such a treaty with the murderers of our humanity. For an African Munich would no more bring peace than did the Munich of Europe in 1938. It would be a betrayal and as such it would weaken the struggle for justice everywhere. But ultimately it would not succeed in preventing the people from fighting for their freedom.

53. Yet, although Africa has no choice but to side with the freedom struggle of southern Africa, it has at the present time very little power to affect the outcome. We are all poor nations. We have no effective economic power to use. Further, we do not even manufacture arms which could be made available to the freedom fighters. All that we can do is to allow the peoples of southern Africa to receive help through our Territories and to use our land for their offices, their hospitals and so on, until they have effectively reoccupied their homeland. This little we do. And we do it because we have already, without effect, implemented all the non-violent pressures within our power.

54. But what of other, non-African, nations? They all claim opposition to *apartheid* and to colonialism. Yet the sad truth is that, far from using their power for justice, many nations represented in this Assembly give continuing and expanding practical support to South Africa and to the Portuguese colonial war effort.

55. Would anyone have imagined that one of the poorest States of Europe could, unaided, fight colonial wars in three Territories which are together 20 times its own size? Its NATO membership, however, allows it almost to disregard its domestic defence needs and devote its armies to Africa. Its membership of the European Free Trade Association strengthens the Portuguese economy and thus helps it to meet an otherwise intolerable burden. And factors like the planned foreign investment in the Cabora Bassa project enable Portugal to increase its exploitation of our continent.

56. The same pattern can be seen in relation to South Africa. Despite all the expressed opposition to *apartheid*, South Africa's foreign exchange deficit is now financed by new investments from abroad, and powerful nations still put more time, effort and money into expanding their trade with South Africa than with the whole of Africa north of the Zambezi.

57. But this is not all. In absolute contravention of the United Nations arms embargo, France—and to a lesser extent some other European nations—continues to provide arms to South Africa. Indeed, it is noticeable that to France the obligations of friendship and peace go only one way. Many French-speaking countries are very sensitive to criticism of France; they value their friendship with that European country and do not like to embarrass it. But France does not seem to be equally concerned with avoiding embarrassment to its African friends or with considering their attitudes on matters affecting African freedom and unity, to which they are publicly committed. And now another great European Power is considering the resumption of arms sales to South Africa and using the French practice as one of its justifications.

58. National leaders do not like it when their sincerity is called into question. Let me just say, therefore, that Africa and the freedom movements have to judge by actions and not by words who are their friends and who are the allies of their enemies.

59. Yet we are sometimes given an explanation. We are told that the arming of this racist State is an aspect of the defence of the free world and does not imply any support for *apartheid*. Really, do words change their meaning? What have freedom and the present régime in South Africa to do with one another? Can you avoid aiding a murderer if you give him a weapon?

60. There is another aspect to this, which is of very great importance to the future of the world. If the Eastern bloc nations make arms available to the freedom fighters, and the Western bloc nations sell arms to South Africa and to Portugal, what will be the likely result? Africa will become a hot front to the cold war. The freedom struggle of southern Africa will become confused by a power conflict which is irrelevant to it. Western countries will then find that their exclusive concern with what they see as the danger from communism has led them to take the side of South Africa in a conflict with the rest of Africa. And the rest of Africa will find that it is fighting against the nations with which it has long ties and in alliance and alignment with others from which it had desired only normal friendly relations.

61. Yet, although Africa recognizes this danger to the peace of the world, we cannot draw back. We cannot ask the peoples of southern Africa to acquiesce in their humiliation and their misery. We cannot fail to support them. For the deliberate attempt to deny the humanity of non-white peoples, which is what *apartheid* means, is an affront to every person in Africa. And because humanity is in fact one and indivis-

ible and because freedom is indivisible, it is also an affront to every free man regardless of colour.

62. The war has already started in southern Africa. Yet even now it would be possible for us to restore peace if we only acted for justice. For if the world would really recognize this evil for what it is and isolate the nations concerned, then change would be inevitable. It might not be quick, but it would be certain; and that certainty would provide new hope for the peoples of southern Africa. The régimes of South Africa and Portugal need the world; they cannot survive without it. This they know. It is why they work so hard to obtain "certificates of respectability" in the form of contacts of any kind.

63. We in Tanzania recognize that nations find it difficult to make sudden changes in their trade and economic policies; we know that inherited patterns of investment and trade cannot be suddenly disregarded. We are neither fools nor impractical idealists. But it is one thing to recognize the facts of an inheritance while you work to change that pattern; it is another thing altogether to intensify that pattern of friendly and trade relationships with a country like South Africa. Up to now that is what has been happening, despite all our words. We in Tanzania are asking the world, and particularly the powerful nations of Europe and America, to change direction and move towards action which will increasingly isolate South Africa. Only by such policies can we hope to secure change without the horrors of war.

64. The issues of southern Africa have been discussed so often that some Members of the United Nations express boredom, and ask why the matter is raised yet again. But the peoples of southern Africa are not bored by their oppression; they are suffering it. They are not tired of repeating that they are oppressed, because their repetition is a cry for help.

65. The issue in southern Africa is one of principle. It does not allow for compromise, because compromise on a matter of human rights is a denial of those rights. We are none of us perfect. Certainly I do not claim that Tanzania is faultless, or that offences against human rights never take place in my country. But it is one thing to try, and fail, and to try again. It is an entirely different matter to base the whole structure of your society on the denial of human rights. With a society of that kind, we compromise at our peril. For, ultimately, humanity will not be denied.

66. The prime function of the United Nations is to establish and to maintain peace. We know that there can be no peace without justice. The greater the movement for justice, the greater the chances of peace. I ask that all Members of the United Nations should work for peace in southern Africa by acting for justice now.

67. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Gregorio López Bravo.

68. Mr. LOPEZ BRAVO (*interpretation from Spanish*): This is the first time that I address the General Assembly as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain and I should like to express my convictions of respect for the principles and faith in the purposes on which our Organization is based.

69. Permit me, Mr. President, to greet you most warmly. We congratulate you on your election and congratulate ourselves on having the privilege of working under someone of such great prestige in international law and in modern diplomacy.

*Mr. Bohiadi (Chad), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

70. The United Nations was created to make a reality of an ancient ideal of man: putting an end to violence and to war. The Charter enshrines this aspiration by stating that its primary purpose is to maintain international peace and security.

71. Has the Organization fulfilled its purposes? Has it saved succeeding generations—as is the intent in the preamble to the Charter—from the scourge of war and has it created conditions under which justice and respect for international obligations can be maintained? I hardly believe that I deserve to be called a sceptic if I affirm that we must, painfully, reply in the negative.

72. Why is this so? In 1945 an overwhelmed mankind emerged from the long twilight of destruction. When the founding Members met in San Francisco to draft the Charter, this was the anguish behind them. Before them lay hope. The world needed and lived with that hope, but in a given historical context, which is reflected in the Charter. The victors in the horrible conflict projected towards the future the memory of a constellation of forces and of procedures and of organization which were a direct legacy of the League of Nations, which had failed, and those procedures and that organization already then were out of date.

73. As though that were not enough, starting in 1945 countries turned towards two antagonistic and absorbing poles. In the cold war years the nightmare of a new armed conflict was dominant, this time with weapons of mass destruction.

74. Twenty-five years after the San Francisco Conference the map of political geography has been transformed. Efforts based on hope would have us forget the dichotomy of that world of the victors and the vanquished. The need for an opening and dialogue seeks to break down a system of hermetic curtains.

75. To the 51 original Members of the Organization, 76 new States have been added, most of them born to international life in recent years, and, having arisen in new circumstances and facing new challenges, do not understand—or barely so—problems which are not theirs as well as hatreds and enthusiasms which they have never felt. This always happens to the generations which follow.

76. Of all the social phenomena which today require the attention of statesmen, youth must be in the fore-

front. The young are no longer the future of our world but a vital part of the present. I believe that it will not be possible to understand the youth of today unless we accept its wish, its legitimate claim, to participate wholly in the dialogue and social decisions of our time. Many of the political formulations by which we govern ourselves lack appeal for the young, who are called upon to live with them. Many of them are definitely obsolete and unacceptable. It is only by participating in the creation of new necessary forms that youth can feel integrated in social life, thus renouncing the temptation to view as legitimate any systematic attack on any established order.

77. The changes which have occurred in the composition of our Organization require relevant changes in the Charter, so as to adapt it to present times. A minimum sense of realism leads us to recognize the special responsibilities of the great Powers in the maintenance of international peace and security. But, if the Security Council does not more faithfully reflect the present international structure, unless there is greater participation by the medium and small Powers in the preparation of solutions to the major problems, and, above all, if the great Powers obstinately exclude from this forum all the key issues of world peace, public opinion and history will reproach us—as they are starting to do already—that the United Nations, being powerless, has sought refuge, as does any escape literature, by dealing with secondary items.

78. While it is important to adjust the Charter to the needs of the present world so as to have a governing framework appropriate for the purposes of the Organization, it is even more necessary to find political solutions to the major problems with which we are faced. From our standpoint, I shall take the liberty of stating the contribution of Spain to this task.

79. Spain, which is and always has been a geographical, cultural and historical crossroads, can serve as a common meeting ground where many points of view and many conflicting situations exist. Geographically, our country is like a frontier guide-post between Europe, Africa and America. I should like to reaffirm the European vocation of Spain. Tradition and destiny unite us to Europe. The most recent link in this relationship with the other European countries, which we wish to be irreversible, is the agreement the Government has signed with the European Economic Community, which came into force on 1 October 1970. It is the first step on a road which Spain intends to follow all the way.

80. As a European and Europe-oriented country, Spain welcomes with satisfaction any policy which consolidates peace on the continent, decreases causes of tension and eliminates artificial divisions, above which a constructive dialogue among peoples must be established or extended. We cannot do without the inexhaustible wealth that each of the various and rich cultures of Europe have represented and still represent, nor can we do without the benefits that will accrue from a stronger relationship between our countries. It is therefore not surprising that, as a logical consequence,

we are interested in European security. In that connexion, the Government of Spain has already shown that it is in favour of participating in a conference having that objective. All European States should participate in it, as should the United States and Canada, on a basis of equality and full rights.

81. I emphasized earlier that Spain is at a crossroads of thoroughfares which, at the extreme west of the Mediterranean, makes us the pivot between Europe and Africa, and on the road from the Atlantic to the East. There we find the Strait of Gibraltar, and my country is vitally interested in anything that happens in the Strait of Gibraltar or through it or on it. Our interest is not only political and economic but also, I would say, physical, because what happens there might affect our own survival and well being. Therefore, passage through the Strait of Gibraltar must as a minimum at all times and on all occasions respect peace, good order and the security of Spain. The Mediterranean must be a sea of peace and security, a source of wealth, a means of communication that will promote the development of all the peoples of the area.

82. We pay preferential attention to anything that happens in the Mediterranean and especially to the destiny of the peoples along its shores. To this we add our feeling of brotherhood with the Arab peoples and our conviction that their aspirations are just. The United Nations will have the most determined support of Spain in its efforts to reach a peaceful and just solution to the Middle East conflict. What is needed is the full implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and all other relevant United Nations resolutions. Together with the withdrawal of troops occupying Territories by force, the Government of Spain considers it to be of the utmost urgency to activate Ambassador Jarring's mission. We hope that he will meet with sincere and prompt co-operation from all the Governments concerned. The legitimate rights of the Palestinian people require due consideration.

83. Geographical ties—Spain with Portugal are the vanguard of Europe facing America—and above all historical and cultural ties, make us feel indissolubly united with the people of Latin America. Any unrest, uncertainty and convulsion assailing our brother peoples on the American continent are crises necessary to crystallize a future of vast potential. Spain feels strongly that she is a partner in that future, just as it considers itself united to a past which led to the independence of that continent, which we had the insight to acknowledge as the blossoming of a mature personality. That political independence, so zealously guarded afterwards, is the guarantee of the economic and social development we ardently hope for and to which we are always prepared to contribute, even beyond our limited strength, with the sincerity and selflessness of brotherhood.

84. When, after a fleeting and painful period which was soon forgotten, Latin America achieved its independence, the unusual destiny of Spain was once

again made manifest. It was indeed unique that when other peoples embarked on the creation of vast colonial empires Spain lost its overseas territories. We now know that Spain had carried out its decolonization before anyone else and it was the most brilliant and generous decolonization of contemporary history. The fruits of that decolonization, which are inexhaustible, made it possible for us to understand the present procedures that have led to the full sovereignty of a host of new States, whose representatives present here Spain salutes, through me, with the offer of our unconditional friendship, on this twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of our Organization and tenth anniversary of resolution 1514 (XV), which has been called the Magna Carta of decolonization.

85. The decolonization policy of Spain started early in the nineteenth century and has followed an uninterrupted and genuine course throughout the decades. All will recall our understanding and assistance in returning to Morocco its full sovereignty at the end of the Protectorate. All will recall our recent policy of decolonization, returning Tarfaya and Ifni to the Kingdom of Morocco—despite the legitimate legal titles warranting the presence of Spain—in a gesture of goodwill towards the beloved people of Morocco. To that must be added the independence accorded Equatorial Guinea, making the Guineans masters of their own destiny, following the desire they expressed in a popular referendum, which United Nations observers noted as an example of good faith.

86. It is not possible for the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain to come to this rostrum—far less so on this solemn commemorative occasion—without stating my country's position on the question of Gibraltar. Spain endorses the doctrine formulated in the United Nations as a peaceful and adequate means of integrating with its homeland a territory that no Spaniard can ever renounce. My Government is prepared to negotiate with Great Britain at any time to that end. It is my hope that the realism of the British people and its representatives will lead them to realize the requirements of the present, making it possible for them to deal with this problem serenely and dispassionately, and that we shall reach an honourable and satisfactory agreement that will nobly safeguard the interests of the civilian population of Gibraltar.

87. At the beginning of this Disarmament Decade, my delegation wishes to join in the appeal made to all States, and particularly to those possessing the most powerful arsenals, to proceed to general and complete disarmament, subject to strict international control. Partial and collateral measures, on which some progress has been made, are clearly insufficient. The time has come to end and reverse the armaments race.

88. Together with the task of ensuring peace, the United Nations also has the very serious commitment of seeing to it that the Second United Nations Development Decade will bring about positive and clearly effective solutions to urgent problems that will brook no further delay. An objective examination, with a social perspective, of the results of the First Development

Decade reveals that the latter are hardly satisfactory. It is true that during those years there was an extraordinary rise in the gross national product and in the *per capita* income of the highly industrialized countries and that the technological advances in those same countries were impressive in the fields of outer space and atomic energy.

89. Yet the differences between the wealthiest and the least wealthy countries have not lessened; they have increased, as our own Organization itself has recorded.

90. A thorough attack is needed on every aspect of development: educational, economic, social, technological and ecological. Spain expresses its complete support for the objectives of the Second Decade and views with the greatest interest the work done so far by the Preparatory Committee for the Second Development Decade, in the hope that the matters of strategy on which there is no agreement yet will soon be achieved.

91. Spain is very happy to note that a series of highly industrialized countries have accepted or are about to accept shortly the commitment to contribute 1 per cent of their gross national product to financing the development of the needy countries. Such commitments are most encouraging, because we must bear in mind that development cannot be attained unless there are political decisions.

92. My country, which is in a situation of medium development and has a great demand for capital to continue its development, has made remarkable efforts to give financial assistance to countries or to international institutions. However, for Spain it is still basic that flexible international trade is as important as direct financial aid.

93. At the same time, the transfer of technology and technical co-operation can achieve satisfactory results, indeed spectacular results, with relatively modest resources. The level of development and well-being of peoples is conditioned by the level of scientific and technological advancement, and one cannot think of harmonizing international relations unless there is a balanced contribution by all to this process of acquiring science and technology which, by its very nature, is universal and knows no frontiers.

94. Unfortunately, in this field too it is a fact that the growing sensitivity to technological problems has not succeeded in shortening the distances between the industrialized countries and those which have not yet reached the minimum threshold of technology. It is not simply a question of the size of investments in science and technology; even though a State at a low level of development were to decide, because of the will of the government, to devote a large percentage of the national income to these subjects, it would be impossible for it to do so because it lacked an adequate educational infrastructure and the necessary training for it. In States which suffer from poor structures and a lack of net resources for modernization, many of

the young university graduates who are trained at so much sacrifice are attracted by the higher remunerations and greater facilities offered by the wealthier nations. At the same time, the capacity of those States to progress is conditioned by their technological inferiority.

95. The acquisition of modern technology, which is essential for the development of the less advanced countries, has a negative and daily more adverse effect on the balance of payments. While studies on the international trade of those countries are at a very advanced stage, the same is not true of research on the very many elements which make up the transfer of technology. That is why Spain has supported the establishment of a specific organ on the subject within UNCTAD. Given the vast complexity of the subject, the determination of the costs of the transfer of technology constitutes one of the most urgent chapters. There must be an urgent study of formulas which will make it possible to compensate for the deficits in the balance of payments resulting from royalties which the under-developed and developing countries have to pay.

96. We are now living a time of revision and reform. Wherever we look we see a transformation of ideas, of ways of life and of techniques. Daily new problems arise, and we know that they can be solved only with imagination and courage. Both the countries which are today fighting against pollution in the cities and deterioration of the environment and those which are spared such concerns for the time being because of their lack of industrialization, have the obligation to create living conditions fit for human beings, to utilize human resources fully, to ensure the participation of all in culture and access of all peoples to scientific and technological progress, on which the material and spiritual development of man depends.

97. The world knows pain and poverty, armed conflict and under-development, but the world also knows that in man lies its best hope. I would not wish to end without affirming my faith in all men, my belief that man will triumph over his difficulties, and herein lies the key to the solution of world problems. Let each of us look into his own conscience and renew our purpose of serving the loftiest ideals of mankind.

98. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Albert Bernard Bongo, President of the Gabonese Republic.

99. President BONGO (*interpretation from French*): The year 1970 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, which was the birth of our Organization.

100. After the last world war, the most cruel and devastating that ever befell mankind, 52 nations met in the city of San Francisco to set up an organization charged with the task of safeguarding peace and promoting better conditions of life in the world.

101. Through the Charter which was then born, these nations were not only translating their will for peace

and happiness; they were also reflecting the deep aspirations of many other peoples for a more secure life in a world of justice, progress and fraternity.

102. These peoples, although they had also greatly suffered from the war, were not at the meeting in San Francisco, for they were deprived of their rights to independence and sovereignty. After the folly of destruction which almost annihilated it, mankind pulled itself together and adopted a code of conduct designed, among other things, for the settlement of disputes among nations by means other than the use of force. This code of conduct, the United Nations Charter, solemnly asks the peoples of the United Nations to be "determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights . . . in the equal rights . . . of nations large and small", "to establish conditions under which justice . . . can be maintained", "to promote social progress and better standards of life" for all men.

103. A quarter of a century has elapsed since the adoption of the United Nations Charter. What achievements and what progress have there been along this road? Indeed, generalized war has been avoided. Many peoples formerly under foreign domination have become Members of the great family of the United Nations, often with the agreement and assistance of the countries that had dominated them before. Human rights are better guaranteed. Efforts have been made to try to improve living conditions for the disinherited peoples.

104. But we must recognize, with modesty, that all these noble ideals are far from having been fully achieved. Indeed, war continues to rage in many parts of the world. What is called colonialism—but I would call it injustice—has not been totally eliminated. Human rights, especially those of the black man, are still trampled under foot and the gap between rich and poor countries, especially those of the third world, becomes ever wider.

105. Thus, after these 25 years of existence, the United Nations presents us with a balance sheet which is characteristic of all human endeavours; that is to say, it is both negative and sometimes positive—I would merely say a positive and negative balance sheet.

106. On the basis of idealistic aspirations and generous intent, appreciable progress has been made, but when viewed with the results obtained, how many delays, how many lost opportunities and how many bitter disillusionments there have been. This should not be sufficient ground to resign oneself to pessimism. We remain convinced that, despite its shortcomings, the Charter is still, for the time being, the only ideal instrument for achieving the objectives which we set for ourselves in San Francisco. However, I think that we must revise the structures of our Organization so that there will be a wider dialogue, and in a spirit of understanding and tolerance, because we shall require much goodwill to overcome selfishness and do away with ulterior motives, thereby finally achieving peace.

107. The tremendous scientific and technological achievements, as well as the material benefits derived from them, which mankind has seen during its long history undoubtedly make one dizzy. These achievements, these material benefits, have led and are still leading to many fundamental changes in all fields of life. Our creative activity multiplies its effects. Man has explored the depths of the oceans, the polar areas, outer space; he has started to conquer outer space and he has already walked on the moon. Our mastery of the universe, starting with that of our own planet earth, which we want to exploit in order to derive from it everything that can be used to the advantage of man, to satisfy all our needs and to improve our life, is developing and expanding at such a pace that the future of civilization will be full of surprises and satisfactions which will go far beyond our wildest dreams.

108. However, everything is not to be found in that forecast of mankind's future. The present world, in its present structure, has such deep imbalances, carefully nurtured by forces that are still outside our purview, that the enjoyment of all the benefits put at our disposal by civilization remains a mockery for many human beings. These forces are to be found both in our own nature and in our physical environment. We still live under the influence of racialism, which can be seen here and there in many phenomena of unjust discrimination. We still live under the influence of a certain past, of hegemonies and egoisms of all kinds which maintain inequality among men and various parts of the world.

109. In this connexion, one can only be surprised and shocked that the United Nations should have two aspects: that which shows an interest in certain parts of the world by trying to the extent possible to restore peace, and that which deliberately shows a deliberate lack of interest in the fate of other men, those of black Africa, to which, unfortunately, I belong.

110. The most striking example of this failure to act can be seen in the bloody conflict that has broken out in western Africa in recent years in which over two million human beings have died. That clearly shows how much graver these consequences are than those of the war in the Middle East or even the confrontation in Indo-China.

111. What has the United Nations done—except to act like Pontius Pilate? The great Powers, which play a leading role in the world arena, while remaining more discreet, more evasive, and above all fond of legal quibbling, and in the United Nations, have a very heavy responsibility in this tragedy. Rather than striving to apply the Charter which they signed, are they not above all interested in defending their interests, in maintaining or even spreading their influence? Gabon rejects all pressure to which it is subjected in this field. We wish to remain masters of our destiny, and especially in this forum and others, where ineffectual condemnations, often serving as a smokescreen for certain appetites, are a matter of indifference to us.

112. We must recognize with modesty that we are still under the influence of hatred, which unleashes violence and provokes conflicts and wars of extermination. We have not yet succeeded in fully defeating ignorance, which is one of the sources of poverty and misery. We are still confronted with physical and moral pain, which engenders death. Nature itself is not yet totally subservient to our will to dominate. It still possesses tremendous forces against which we have not yet found any defence. The earth itself gives us a striking example of inequality by the differences to be found in various regions in the possibilities offered for a better life. This, again, is a cause of inequality among men.

113. Our scientific and technological achievements, of which we are so proud and which we invented to make us happier, in the final analysis may lead mankind to ruin and destruction, if it puts them to bad use or at the service of the forces of evil which, unfortunately, are among the innate instincts of man.

114. Progress and harmony, therefore, are a fascinating vision of the future of man but this will not soon develop into a peaceful and solid reality, since it is still dependent upon the triumph of man over the forces of evil which give rise to such imbalances in the world.

115. Therefore, it is a favourable omen that man should have become aware of this situation and should have organized to strive to reduce these imbalances as much as possible. For the objectives enshrined in the Charter of this Organization are, when analysed, only a minimum programme of achievements which will make it possible to eliminate some of those imbalances which we have mentioned—I say “some” because there are so many that our present Charter could not possibly eliminate them all.

116. I would not wish to let this opportunity pass without expressing the gratitude of my country to the United Nations for its contribution to the relentless efforts we are making with all the resources at our disposal to promote the economic growth of Gabon. In the situation in which my country finds itself, I intend to speak not of politics but of economics, because the latter must make possible the social progress of the people of Gabon and its accession to a better standard of living. I therefore wish to thank the specialized agencies, such as FAO, WHO, UNESCO and UNDP, which give my country valuable assistance in its economic, social and cultural development.

117. But I am anxious to satisfy the aspirations of my people to a better life and the gap between the developed and the under-developed countries is so constantly widening that I am moved to ask for more. We need considerable capital to set up in our country the infrastructure of a modern country. We need capital for development. We have to set up processing industries. Only a body like the World Bank can obtain all those things for us in conditions we can accept. I think that Gabon, like the other countries of the third world, is entitled to expect increased assistance from the specialized agencies of the United Nations, among them, as I have said, the World Bank.

118. In conclusion, I wish to address an urgent appeal to the international community: let all nations, large and small, unite their efforts with greater faith, determination and sincerity than in the past so that this Organization may live for ever and pursue the objectives assigned to it.

119. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Speaker of the House of Representatives and Special Representative of the President of Liberia, His Excellency the Honourable Richard A. Henries.

120. Mr. HENRIES: In the name of our President, William V. S. Tubman, we bring greetings, felicitations and salutations to all of the Governments represented at this august Assembly on this historic occasion of the silver anniversary of this great world Organization. This observance bears a special significance for President Tubman: firstly, because the first delegation that he accredited to a foreign conference after he assumed his high office was to the United Nations when it was founded in the year 1945 in San Francisco; secondly, because he is the only Head of State of a republican Government who was in office when the United Nations was founded and has continued in office up to the present. Over the intervening years, he has followed with close interest the affairs of this body. Its successes have given him much delight and its set-backs have presented him with a challenge and the determination to see to it, as far as in his power lies, that the Organization fulfils the role envisaged for it by its founders.

121. We in Liberia, under the enlightened and dynamic leadership of President Tubman, believe strongly in the provisions embodied in the United Nations Charter. The Organization's mission of world peace has always stood as a guiding influence in the conduct of our President's foreign policy. Quietly, unobtrusively, but diligently, he has worked for peace and brotherhood among all peoples. This quest for peace led to his convocation of the Monrovia Conference<sup>1</sup> in May 1961. At a follow-up conference of African Heads of State and Government at Lagos, Nigeria, in January 1962, he proposed an association of African States, and submitted a draft charter in which he set forth the guidelines for the formation of such an association. The provisions of that document form a major portion of the present Charter of the Organization of African Unity; and so today, he takes pardonable pride in being one of the foremost architects of the Organization of African Unity.

122. At home, his quest for peace has reduced to the very vanishing point intratribal and intertribal wars and other tribal disturbances which were obstacles to the steady development of our nation prior to his Administration. This is a tribute to his unification and integration policy, which is the bedrock of the peace and stability which today reign throughout the country, and which we believe, if seriously considered by other Heads of State and Members of this Organization, will be a step towards world peace.

<sup>1</sup> Conference of Heads of African and Malagasy States, held at Monrovia from 8 to 12 May 1961.

123. His belief in the equality of all peoples irrespective of race, colour or creed has made Liberia a melting pot where different nationals join us in our task of national development with mutual benefits to the nation and themselves. In this connexion, his open-door policy has made a tremendous impact on our national life.

124. These policies enunciated by President Tubman are evidence of his faith in the United Nations, for he has devoted his life to the pursuance of those goals which constitute the cardinal reasons for the founding of this Organization, namely, the pursuit of peace and happiness in the world and a vigorous prosecution of the concept of the equality of all peoples.

125. It was the President's desire to take part personally in this observance, but circumstances beyond his control render that impossible; this he regrets very much. We assure the Assembly, however, that he is with us in spirit, with his best wishes that the United Nations will achieve a large measure of success in its noble work for mankind, both today and in the years ahead.

126. Through the blessings of the Great Architect of the universe, His guidance and protection, today we congratulate ourselves on the celebration of the silver jubilee of the founding of the United Nations, and especially do we congratulate those nations which were signatories of the Charter when this Organization was founded in San Francisco. That this great Organization has survived for 25 years in spite of present world conditions—when there exist among Member States conflicting ideas and ideologies, disregard for international law, protocol and procedure, national and international social and political unrest; in a world where conventions, treaties and agreements are regarded as scraps of paper that can easily be brushed aside and unilaterally abrogated; in a world where morals and decency seem no longer to exist—should make us take a deep breath and say "hitherto hath the Lord helped us and saved us from another global conflict".

127. When we were assembled at San Francisco 25 years ago, the only theme was "Let there be lasting peace in the world". The reasons why the Treaty of Versailles failed and why the League of Nations fell short of the realization of the hopes of its founders were discussed. Nevertheless it had to be admitted that the League of Nations, with all its shortcomings, laid the foundation for the founding of the United Nations. The representatives at San Francisco endeavoured so to frame the Charter that Member States which had committed themselves to the ideal of peace—which believed that they would work together in an atmosphere of goodwill, sincerity and confidence, respecting the rights of others and the four fundamental freedoms—would strive to outlaw war and thus make the world a safe place in which to live. But we fear—we fear terribly—that some nations, Members of the United Nations, respect neither the rights of nations nor the individuals who live within their territory.

128. In his address to the sixteenth session of the United Nations, on 23 October 1961, President Tubman, realizing how far some of the Member States had seemingly departed from the principles laid down in the Charter, observed:

"Unfortunately, we have not permitted these good intentions to continue in their proper course. By the selfishness of States and statesmen, we have segmented the institution into blocs of vested interests, instead of maintaining it as a United Nations. In my opinion, our major point of concentration should be in the direction of a review of the fundamentals of the United Nations Charter in relation to our attitude towards it, with a view to enforcing stricter adherence to the great obligations which all Members undertook by subscribing to the Charter." [1041st meeting, para. 11.]

We think that after 25 years of trial and error we should review those fundamentals, sympathize with existing conditions and struggle to apply the remedy that would cure them.

129. This Organization was conceived in the ways of democracy, and as such is committed to the principles of democracy. There is no doubt that it has demonstrated such a commitment. Nevertheless, provision in the Charter for the exercise of the veto power by the five permanent members of the Security Council has been proved by events since 1945 to be dissonant with democratic principles. This is the more so since no mechanism was devised by which the Organization could override a veto when cast by a permanent member, any such veto action being final and incontestable. Invariably, the use of the veto has been dictated by clashing national interests and directed mainly towards selfish ends. The creeping evil over the years is that the veto device has unduly crippled the Organization in many instances and has placed in doubt its motives and effectiveness in the consideration of some serious problems. Such a situation should not be allowed to exist in the Security Council, which is the policy-making arm of the United Nations. It is high time that the intent underlying the extension of the veto power to the five permanent members was re-examined.

130. We submit that it has become urgently necessary to abolish the veto power in face of the pressing conditions of the world; otherwise we are afraid that disillusionment with the Organization may develop and the quest for peace in our time will, as a consequence, be an elusive goal. Lest it should appear that the veto power gives one Government the right to impose its will on the majority—which, in our opinion, would be most undemocratic—we would recommend and suggest that every nation, large or small, should abide by the will of the majority. That is democracy in action.

131. We admit, however, that but for the United Nations, where States through their representatives can vent their spleen on matters of concern to them, there would long since have been a third world war. We further admit that agencies of the United Nations

have made great contributions to countries and peoples and have given relief in many respects. We refer to the work done by the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other such organizations. That, however, is not enough.

132. The most essential thing is to have a better and safer world in which to live, and every nation, large or small, developed or under-developed, has an important role to play in achieving that goal. Such an objective cannot be attained only by the big Powers, which are in the arms race. Instead of attaining this objective, by having such dangerous weapons they are making the complications involved in the quest for world peace more complicated. The might-makes-right policy has failed in the past, is a failure at present and will fail for ever; for right will ever be right, and wrong will ever be wrong.

133. In 1945 it was impressed upon us that if a Member nation flagrantly violated the Charter which it has undertaken to uphold and defend, appropriate steps would be taken against it to make it realize that its acts were frowned upon by its colleagues. After 25 years of existence, this great body is, seemingly, helpless to take action against a Member State; even the International Court of Justice finds itself in the same helpless condition. As long as such conditions exist, there will be no peace in the world; nations will war against nations, and enemies instead of friends and brothers will be meeting in these walls and sitting around the table—something that was never contemplated at the birth of this Organization 25 years ago. It was the hope of the founding Members that all deliberations of the United Nations would take place in an atmosphere of friendship. Where differences of opinion arose, immediate measures would be taken amicably to adjust and settle them so that peace, the prime objective of this body, would always exist among nations and peoples.

134. Continuing our stock-taking, we think it is opportune to say that it was never expected that a Member of this body would by force impose its concept of government on another nation; that in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the United Nations Charter all nations subscribed to the realization of the fact that every human being is human and that all human beings have in common certain inherent and inalienable rights that should be respected, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex. If a nation that has subscribed to this tries to depart from it with impunity, sanctions are imposed against it. However, some nations, subsequent to the imposition of such sanctions, not only try to violate the sanctions in some subtle way but also seek to justify themselves in doing so. The Organization sees it, the Organization knows of it, yet nothing is done to call a halt to such action. How can there be peace in our time? The situation I have described was never envisaged when the Charter was adopted in 1945.

135. Let us remember that this Organization, by its Charter and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is committed to social equality and justice for all peoples, irrespective of race or origin. Yet we have failed to act while certain Member nations have trampled upon the fundamental rights of peoples within their territories. Though the walls of this Assembly and the halls of the various Committees resound each year with oratory deploring the racist policies of the Union of South Africa, Member States have aided and abetted those policies through trade and commercial intercourse with that country, notwithstanding the resolutions adopted by this Organization to the contrary.

136. It is interesting to mention that I recall very vividly sitting in the meeting as a member of the committee on the preamble of the Charter with the late General Smuts of the Union of South Africa when so grave a question as human rights was being discussed. The General, who led his delegation to the San Francisco Conference, after defending what were considered the failures of the League of Nations, stated in no uncertain terms that all men have in common certain rights which should be respected, regardless of race, colour, religion or sex. It is an ugly paradox to see how far the successors of General Smuts have departed from this high ideal for which he had great hopes.

137. France for a number of years has been selling arms to South Africa; and now has come the announcement by the new British Conservative Government of the resumption of arms sales to South Africa, much to the dismay and shock of many countries. Most of the big Powers have economic interests in South Africa. In sum total, these exchanges of trade and commerce with the Pretoria Government have done nothing but help that Government to get more deeply entrenched in its policy of *apartheid* and thus enforce a firmer régime of terror against the rightful people of that country.

138. The Portuguese Government on the other hand continues its inhumane treatment of the people of Angola and Mozambique. It has flouted resolutions by this body calling upon it to desist from its atrocious acts against human dignity in those areas, insisting on the fallacy that the Territories are part and parcel of Portugal. Portugal, too, is apparently receiving the tacit encouragement and support of Members of this Organization in this iniquitous policy.

139. President Tubman, shocked by the action of South Africa, and after consulting and reaching an agreement with Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, jointly took action against the South African Government before the world court; and although the International Court of Justice had rendered two advisory opinions, yet in the final analysis it found itself unable to assume jurisdiction over the subject matter. One is left to wonder upon what foundation such a decision rests.

140. In Rhodesia, yet another racist régime came to power in 1965. Policies patterned after those of South

Africa are employed to deny basic human rights to the rightful people of the Territory. Britain, which exercised control over the affairs of Rhodesia at the time, proclaimed the unilateral declaration of independence by Rhodesia as an act of rebellion against the British Government. It is a sad spectacle that the British Government has shown unusual impotence in quelling this rebellion in spite of the appalling crimes against humanity, crimes being perpetrated against human decency, by the illegal régime in Rhodesia. Instead, after a period of five years, the rebel government proclaimed Rhodesia a Republic in absolute defiance of the British Government.

141. The Liberian Government and people are strongly opposed to any form of oppression in any part of world. We are doubly opposed when these systematic campaigns of oppression based on racism are directed against peoples of Africa who are asserting a rightful claim to their own homeland. We stand immovably committed, through efforts in the Organization of African Unity and this world body, to stamp out all forms of colonialism and racism from the face of the African continent. In this momentous effort, we call for the support and co-operation of nations and peoples of goodwill everywhere, so that ultimately all peoples may enjoy that human respect and dignity with which God intends to adorn and beautify man.

142. The attitude of some Member States towards the racist régimes in Africa has brought to question their sincerity when it comes to matters which affect the general weal of the United Nations. Unless these Member States take a positive turn for the better, we fear that the faith and confidence of the millions of people for whose welfare and benefit the United Nations was conceived will be badly shaken. This should not happen if this Organization, conceived in the ways of democracy, equality and justice, is to fulfil its mission of promoting lasting peace, understanding and prosperity in the world.

143. When we as Members of the United Nations become sincere in our approach to world peace, when we have the courage to say to a nation, great or small, "you have violated the fundamental principles for which this Organization stands, and therefore you must adjust yourself and conform or else bear the penalty", when we have the stamina to speak out and act against wrong, when we become determined not to continue to follow the policy of appeasement which to a great extent was responsible for the Second World War—then and not until then shall we begin to see that speck of light that will lead to world peace.

144. Despite the fact that in some instances the hopes of the founders of this Organization have not been realized, yet we are still optimistic that as the years go by we will stop, think and decide to pursue such a course as will correct the evils.

145. In a further attempt to achieve this goal, the Organization of African Unity was founded and certain fundamental principles were laid down in the Charter of that body that would bring closer co-operation

among African States and, through them, to the world. Africans in particular must consider one another as brethren and these brothers should consider friends outside the African continent also as their brothers. Hence the vast majority of African States, believing in the brotherhood of man, that all men are created equal and should equally enjoy certain inherent rights, continue to protest colonialism in Africa and wholeheartedly support the liberation of their brother Africans. We have no doubt that since the United Nations in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights has declared that all human beings should be regarded as human beings with freedom, justice and equality in dignity, all efforts will be made by this great Organization to eliminate colonialism in Africa.

146. We observe that today there exist several groupings of nations, both continental and regional in scope, whose aims are to foster joint economic and diplomatic understanding. Peculiar to itself among such groups of nations is the group of non-aligned nations whose sphere extends to practically all of the continents and, unlike most of the other groupings, lacks an established organizational and administrative machinery, but yet enjoys a cohesiveness and a strong direction of purpose rarely achieved under such circumstances. These nations have as a group evolved into a force of great influence in matters affecting the vital interests of the world. Though basically ideological in character, their endeavours have fundamentally been in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations in securing peace and happiness for the nations and peoples of the world. They have progressively grown into a balancing force among the contending great Powers and thus have assured reasonable tranquillity in our troubled world. Their concern for the state of the world is continually demonstrated at each of their conferences; and the last one, in Lusaka, Zambia, in September of this year was another testimony of their quest for a better world for all nations and peoples.

147. In his address before the conference of non-aligned nations in Cairo, United Arab Republic, on 7 October 1964, President Tubman had this to say:

"Non-alignment can never or should never be viewed as a refusal to choose between good and evil, moral or immoral, to take sides with blocs or to remain neutral in a dynamic world. On the contrary the political actions of States ought to make it possible for them to enter various agreements—commercial, economic, technical—and undertake other national and international activities with other nations without affecting their independence of thought and action.

"Non-alignment should become a vital, moral and spiritual force, a helpful influence between the contending forces of peace and war, hate and love, broken human relationships and sacred treaties and obligations. Non-alignment should be made a great and formidable international causeway through which nations can find the path to conciliation, reconciliation and the adjustment of differences

between nations, and can evolve an era of universal peace founded on justice, equality and equity.”

148. Such is the noble task to which the non-aligned nations have addressed themselves; such is the task to which we must all be committed, whether aligned or non-aligned.

149. Great have been the technological advancements of the great Powers since the founding of the United Nations 25 years ago. They have invented nuclear and thermonuclear energy and other highly sophisticated weapons, which have become more refined and deadly with each passing year. While holding in their hands the power to destroy mankind within minutes, they have exercised great restraint and sober-mindedness, and have engaged in a relentless search for peace to the extent of conceiving plans for the conversion of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This is a most honourable and commendable act of goodwill, for which we sincerely congratulate these great Powers.

150. Now in closing, may we remind you of the sentiments of our President when he addressed this Organization in 1961, which we think should be carefully considered by every representative here present, and which should be conveyed to their respective Governments:

“I believe profoundly that the powerful nations of the world will not betray the hopes of humanity

by unwillingness to support absolutely the fundamental tenets of mankind as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, nor will they resort to unilateral or bilateral action to bring about solutions which do not accord with those fundamental tenets.

“It is only in such an atmosphere of faith and dedication to the ideals to which we have subscribed by our membership in this world body, that mankind can face the future fearlessly and bravely, and work reassuringly so that, eventually, right may triumph over might, justice overwhelm oppression, reason replace irrationality, the blessings of liberty obliterate the tyranny of domination and human welfare transcend ‘race-centredness’. These are the ideals to which we have dedicated ourselves, and we stand committed to them in the critical days which face us.” [1041st meeting, paras. 41 and 42.]

151. Mr. President, we congratulate you on your election by your colleagues to preside over this unique and history-making session of the General Assembly. We have no doubt that under your able leadership the deliberations will be most successful and that plans will be laid and pursued for the preservation of this great world Organization and for the bringing of peace to the world and happiness, prosperity and friendship to all men.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*