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Agenda item 24:

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President: Mr. Stanisław TREPCZYŃSKI (Poland).

In the absence of the President, Mr. Maghur (Libyan Arab Republic), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 24

Strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States (*continued*)

1. Mr. BORCH (Denmark): It is a distinctive feature of our Organization that over the years much attention has been given—in thinking, in speech and in writing—to the problem of how to strengthen the United Nations Organization, enhance its role in the world community and render its organs more effective. It is a well-known fact that opinion on those points has differed within the membership and that from time to time those differences of opinion have engendered fears that the Organization lacked strength to survive the discord. But our Organization has proved to be viable; it has possessed the necessary strength to tide us over the controversies. The fact that the discussions are going on and have even been intensified should rather, in our view, be taken as a sign of health. For no system is so perfect that constant vigilance, care and consideration of its performance are not needed to keep it functioning. And if the system is to function even better and more effectively, efforts must be devoted to unprejudiced and far-sighted discussions on what improvements are desired and what we are prepared to sacrifice to attain the desired aim.

2. My delegation, for one, has persistently followed the growth and evolution of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, occasionally with misgivings, more often with pleasure, but always with interest. At the more practical level, we were gratified to be involved, a couple of years ago, in the work of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, a Committee in which, by the way, Romania played an active and constructive part. I am referring to that Committee here because, in our view, we should not forget that the performance of practical

tasks—or, in other words, the flexible and effective discharge of functions—is essential to enable us to devote the necessary attention and energy to substantive problems. We therefore share the conviction expressed in the draft resolution before us about “the need to bring about further improvements in the activities of the United Nations and its organs, taking into account the new realities of the world” [A/L.684 and Add.1-4].

3. Turning now to the draft resolution as a whole, I believe that it contains several observations and recommendations to which the majority of the membership can undoubtedly subscribe. We, for our part, welcome the Romanian initiative [A/8792] as a fresh manifestation of the sustained and active efforts of the Romanian Government to help ease international tensions and promote understanding between nations, globally as well as regionally. The Danish Government also cherishes the ideals by which these endeavours are inspired. And we share the opinion that the United Nations should be the indispensable focal point for harmonizing actions of nations aimed at the attainment of our common goal, and that the Organization should become a steadily more effective instrument for peace and development.

4. We find it satisfying that these noble principles were embodied in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which the General Assembly adopted unanimously at its twenty-fifth session [resolution 2625 (XXV)]. To us, that Declaration is a clear and unambiguous manifestation of the dedication of Member States to the goals and principles laid down in the Charter. And from the same session we must also recall the Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations [resolution 2627 (XXV)] and the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security [resolution 2734 (XXV)], both important and relevant documents pursuing the same goals as the Declaration on friendly relations.

5. We see the Romanian initiative as a reaffirmation of the principles laid down in the Declarations to which I have just referred. In our opinion, the draft resolution should be viewed and interpreted in this context, and for that reason, among others, my delegation is ready to support it.

6. Mr. JOUEJATI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The motives which impelled the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania to propose the inclusion of item 24 in the agenda of this session of the General Assembly were undoubtedly its concern to see a spirit of renewed hope in international relations based on law and justice rather than on force and faits accomplis.

resulting from force. When a war of extermination has been unleashed against the peoples of Indo-China, the people of Palestine and the peoples of southern Africa and when the territories of three sovereign Arab countries are still occupied, the Romanian initiative gives us cause for deep reflection. Is it not time to reverse this trend towards what Mrs. Myrdal of Sweden has called “neo-barbarism”¹ and to try the criterion of justice rather than that of force, as the representative of Brazil put it so eloquently during one of the debates on international security? That is why the Romanian initiative is timely and deserves our full support.

7. The United Nations, that instrument in which mankind has placed its hopes for lasting peace in dignity, justice and equality, unfortunately sees its will thwarted by certain Powers, its resolutions flouted, its mission to emancipate mankind from all manifestations of colonialism and neo-colonialism impeded by the forces of reaction and racial discrimination, of “chosen people” and of colonial expansionism. Hence the urgent appeal from the delegation of Romania at the very outset of the debate on strengthening the role of the United Nations: an appeal for closer international solidarity in the face of problems which, while seeming to relate to particular areas, in fact confront mankind as a whole because they touch upon the very concept of a world of peace and justice.

8. As the representative of Romania said in his incisive statement: “... all nations are called upon ... to participate in the solution of the major issues which now face mankind ...” [2086th meeting, para. 7]. Justice and peace are indivisible. Once aggression is allowed to harvest its fruits, there is nothing to stem the aggressive forces which rely on the primacy of force while seeking in the interim to transform the United Nations into a subordinate institution for theoretical research.

9. The Romanian initiative replies to this challenge by drawing on the as yet untapped resources of a joint effort to strengthen the role of the United Nations in which international security would cease to be synonymous with security for the aggressors and their ill-gotten acquisitions and would become the concern of the international community at large; where international co-operation would be geared to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States rather than betoken compromise and deals dictated by expansionism, as though the development of international law were set at nought, where the promotion of the rules of international law would be inspired by morality rather than by *faits accomplis* achieved by force; where human progress would depend on the emancipation of the masses from the colonial and neo-colonial yoke, rather than result from the effects of colonial oppression and the occupation of the territory of sovereign States.

10. Was it not these truths that the representative of Romania had in mind when he said in his succinct manner that “... certain important resolutions adopted by our Organization have not had a positive impact on the evolution of international life, and very often are ignored in practice”, that “many human lives and vast material wealth

have been destroyed by war”; and that “the gap between the developing countries and the economically advanced nations is constantly widening” [2086th meeting, para. 16].

11. It goes without saying that the results of this initiative will ultimately depend on the importance that Member States attach to the comments and suggestions they are invited to make, so that the measures undertaken to strengthen the role of the United Nations and to consolidate international co-operation and promote law emerge as clear, thoughtful and vigorous. International solidarity must be mobilized to curb criminal ambitions aimed at ensuring that criminal, flagrant violations of the Charter remain unpunished. Only a united front of countries which love peace and justice can fulfil the wish of the non-aligned countries referred to by the representative of Romania, citing the Declaration adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Georgetown, Guyana: “‘the United Nations must not merely reflect development in the contemporary world, but, by exerting a positive influence on them, contribute to the furtherance of world peace and progress’” [Ibid., para. 21.]. And it is in this spirit that the representative of Romania expressed the basic truth in this regard, when he said:

“With this in mind we consider that the United Nations should act with more determination in order to eliminate promptly and definitively colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. The greatest attention should be focused on the moral, political and material support to be given to the liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples.” [Ibid., para. 30.]

12. If the United Nations, thanks to the firm solidarity of its peace-loving and justice-loving Members, succeeds in condemning, both in words and deeds, colonialism, oppression and occupation, then an era of true and unlimited co-operation would come about and the development of international law would become a constructive task, rather than a simple game of abstractions or the expression of mere wishes. If our debate and our action contribute to this effect, we shall have saved our Organization from the paralysis in which the enemies of law, peace and justice would like to see it.

13. Mr. OLCAY (Turkey): The fact that we are discussing with interest the question of the strengthening of the role of the United Nations demonstrates, if there were any need for such a demonstration, the necessity felt by the international community to make the United Nations a more effective organ. We are therefore grateful to the Romanian delegation for taking such an important initiative, which may bear significant results in strengthening the United Nations.

14. The question we are discussing seems to us to have two different facets which are of a complementary nature. One is to strengthen the United Nations in order to enable it to assume a more effective role within the present order of international relations. The second is to provide a new and more important role for the United Nations within the future order of international relations. We consider the draft resolution in this broad context.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, First Committee, 1882nd meeting.*

15. Looking back at its 27 years of existence, we see that the United Nations has suffered from two kinds of gaps: one is the gap between the objectives of the Charter and the United Nations capability to realize them fully; and the second is the gap between the United Nations as an operating system and the concrete problems which beset the Organization. However, it should not be forgotten that the United Nations, being an integral part of international politics—perhaps more so than all the other actors on the international scene—is also more affected by and dependent on the international environment to which it belongs. Therefore it seems misleading to regard an international organization as a failure or a success because it has acted in accordance with the limits set for it by its international environment.

16. By the same token, in order to achieve positive results in our endeavours to strengthen the role of the United Nations, we should not deal with the Organization in the abstract but should give due regard to the factors and realities of international relations. The fundamental characteristic of international relations is the constant presence of increasingly accelerated change.

17. But the present state of international relations, which renders it possible for all the European States to sit around the same table, is quite different from the pattern of international relations of even the most recent past. It would not be erroneous to say that we are in a transitional stage, passing into a new era, the exact features of which are not yet clear. The dependence of the United Nations on its environment makes it imperative for our Organization to make the necessary changes to adjust itself to its rapidly-changing milieu. On the other hand, the prevailing fluidity of international relations provides new opportunities for the United Nations to assume a more effective role in the future in increasing co-operation among States, especially in the economic and social fields, as well as in the maintenance of peace and security in the world.

18. In the first place, that fluidity in the international system, by its very nature, emphasizes the importance of the role of the United Nations as a collective, norm-creating body. Technological advances have opened new horizons as well as creating new problems. The United Nations may well be able to establish international norms regulating new fields, such as outer space and the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, or norms protecting the human environment against the adverse effects of technological advances.

19. Second, one of the marked trends of international relations is a strong thrust towards globalism. Technological and social advances have greatly reduced the dimensions of our world; therefore, not only peace and security, but also the economic and social development of all States are inextricably intertwined. This state of international relations has engendered the rapid growth of interdependence among States, which consequently increases the necessity for the United Nations to assume the role of an effective centre of harmonization and co-operation.

20. Third, the cessation of the era of cold war may also contribute to strengthening the capability of the United Nations to bring effective solutions to international problems.

21. It is with all those aspirations in mind that we welcome the agenda item on strengthening the role of the United Nations, as proposed by the Romanian delegation [A/8792]. In our view, to strengthen the role of the United Nations and adjust it to the new realities of international relations is more than just an initiative taken by one creative delegation; it is almost a natural consequence of newly emerging trends in international relations themselves.

22. The United Nations, like all other international institutions, is a living organism and, as with every living organism, its ability to survive largely depends on its ability to adjust itself to the changing conditions of international life. The Romanian delegation deserves our praise for having provided us all with a valuable opportunity to take some steps in the right direction.

23. We see a close link between the debate we had on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations² and our present agenda item. On its twenty-fifth anniversary the United Nations was the subject of an extensive as well as an intensive review and many valuable ideas were put forward. However, because of the lack of any follow-up mechanism, all these views vanished among the multitude of documents of the United Nations. The report that is now going to be prepared by the Secretary-General may bring those ideas back into life and, together with whatever new ideas may emerge, may provide a framework for exploring ways and means to strengthen the role of the United Nations. We also hope that delegations in their replies to the Secretary-General will give due regard to the future role of the United Nations.

24. I should stress at this stage that we are of the opinion that the role of the United Nations can be strengthened within the present system of the Charter, as the provisions of the Charter provide ample flexibility for taking action to that end.

25. We hope that this work may be the first step in initiating a process of evolution of the United Nations which will enable it not only to keep pace with the progress of the world order but also to contribute directly to the creation of a more rational and more peaceful world order.

26. Mr. STATHATOS (Greece): The Greek delegation, representing a country firmly attached to the principles of the United Nations Charter, welcomes the initiative taken by Romania to raise before this Assembly the question of the strengthening of the role of the United Nations. It is gratifying to us that this initiative has been taken by a Balkan country with which Greece maintains cordial and friendly relations constituting a concrete expression of the principle of promoting friendly relations amongst countries of differing political and social systems.

27. In approaching such a question one cannot but recall that the creation of our Organization was achieved at tremendous sacrifice: blood and ruins and millions of dead who perished so that a better world might be born. In this, the share of Greece, a founding Member of the United Nations, was large—too large indeed if one takes into

² *Twenty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1860th, 1862nd to 1870th, 1872nd to 1883rd and 1927th meetings.

account the heavy losses and the appalling suffering of the Greek people.

28. Our interest in this matter is, therefore, understandable. And we are appreciative of the fact that the Romanian delegation consulted a broad spectrum of Member States and submitted draft resolution A/L.684 and Add.1-4, of which Greece is a sponsor.

29. The United Nations Charter, which in essence is a message of peace, liberty and justice, provides a juridical framework for preserving world peace. Its principles are valid not only for this generation or the next, but also for the generations to come. However, the machinery and the method of their realization were not meant to be immutable. Indeed, no social body can claim for itself immutability while historic changes in the structure of the world are taking place. What is needed is not so much the adoption of more and more declarations of principle but a readjustment of our procedures, an overhaul of our machinery, and the political will to fulfil our international obligations and implement the decisions and resolutions we are ceaselessly adopting. It would seem as if nowadays we are much more preoccupied with resolution-making than with problem-solving. This explains the persistent reappearance, through successive reincarnations, of resolutions dealing with the same matter. Our Organization suffers from what might be called a lack of commitment. There is a tendency to consider United Nations principles as nothing but a series of academic rules. Thus we risk becoming mere observers and witnesses of dramatic developments and tragedies which we should have tried to prevent, or the consequences of which we should at least have tried to eradicate. As a result, the gap between noble ideas and sad reality is becoming wider every day.

30. It is far from the intention of my delegation to paint a sombre picture of the existing situation. We think, however, that it is the duty of every country that looks to the United Nations to safeguard peace and security not to overlook its shortcomings and deficiencies and not to hesitate to engage in constructive criticism when the occasion demands it.

31. We do not, of course, underestimate the positive role played by the United Nations since the end of the last world war, nor do we deny that it has succeeded in instilling its noble principles in the conscience of men and nations. Aggression, for example, wherever it regrettably manifests itself under various forms and guises, feels the need to use a faked passport in order to penetrate into the realm of international legality. Everyone feels the need to prove, to the extent possible, the legitimacy of his actions by invoking the Charter. This may not be much, but it is psychological progress, which shows a tendency that gains momentum with time. Neither do we underestimate the arduous efforts of our Organization to ensure recognition of the right to self-determination, the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, and the achievement of economic and social development. Our activities in these fields should not be overlooked, since the prerequisites of international security are multi-dimensional and must be considered as a whole.

32. The aims we set ourselves at the outset are still partly in the field of aspirations. World public opinion, which

perhaps expected too much of the United Nations, shows increasing scepticism regarding its effectiveness. We have to admit that a great deal remains to be done collectively by the Organization in order to improve its instrumentality and make it capable of responding to the political realities of today. That feeling is undoubtedly shared by the membership and explains why even in recent declarations, the declarations for instance adopted during the twenty-fifth anniversary session, Member States are urged to seek improved implementation of the means and methods provided for in the Charter for the exclusively peaceful settlement of any dispute or situation. Members are also urged to respond to the immediate need to agree on guidelines for more effective peace-keeping operations.

33. The Security Council, on the other hand, is asked to take steps to facilitate the conclusion of the agreements envisaged in Article 43 of the Charter in order fully to develop its capacity for enforcement action as provided for under Chapter VII of the Charter.

34. There is, in fact, a vast field for organizing peace-keeping operations. We could cite many examples from the past when such a United Nations force has been able to intervene with unquestionable success, as in the case of Cyprus, for instance. But those operations were all *ad hoc* enterprises and were sometimes hastily improvised.

35. It is high time, we believe, to progress along the road towards the preparation of an all-embracing contractual statute which will regulate all aspects of peace-keeping, whose financing cannot depend exclusively on voluntary contributions.

36. No doubt the Security Council has done much in the past 27 years to safeguard peace, but the Charter allows it to do even more. It can, for example, exercise the rights conferred upon it in Article 34 and grapple with disputes before they degenerate into crises that might threaten peace. Once seized of a question or problem, the Security Council should not merely content itself with doing what is most urgent. It must go further than provisional pacification, which, being provisional, is inevitably precarious.

37. Those points are mentioned only by way of illustration, simply to show that there is still a great deal to be done, even with regard to recent commitments unanimously agreed upon by our Organization. Now it is up to the Member States to submit concrete proposals which, in this present period of *détente* and closer international co-operation, might contribute to strengthening the role of the United Nations and thus enable it to perform its mission effectively.

38. Of course a great deal depends upon the political will of the Member States themselves to fulfil the obligations they have assumed. We agree that it would be illusory to think that it is possible to find solutions to the world's problems through institutional reforms alone. On the other hand, we can be sure that the peoples of this world will demand more than mere statements of good intent. In a world that is constantly evolving, in an era in which everything is changing and progressing, the new generation in particular can no longer accept the frequent breakdowns of the machinery for the preservation of peace which

functions in New York. We must not expect world public opinion to give weight to our declarations unless they are accompanied by our determination to apply them and unless they are accompanied by a concrete demonstration of our collective will to prove by deeds that the spirit of San Francisco is still alive.

39. Mr. DAVID (Liberia): The vital problem of revitalizing and strengthening the role of the United Nations in the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between nations—the subject under consideration by the General Assembly—is in fact the central issue of the United Nations.

40. Needless to say, if the problems which beset the human race were catalogued, the strengthening of international peace and security would rank foremost. This issue is indeed, the bedrock of our Organization, for under the aegis of the United Nations mankind continually seeks an answer to the question of how he, as a member of an organized society, can create a situation in which his survival will not be threatened by war.

41. The devastation of both human life and property which armed conflicts cause has, therefore, for 27 years stimulated in these hallowed chambers the great need and determination to, in the words of the Charter, make the United Nations a centre for harmonizing the actions of its Members in the attainment of international peace and security, which is one of the primary purposes of this world body.

42. No doubt can therefore be entertained as to the appropriateness of this item, and the need for its inclusion in the agenda as a matter of high importance and urgency cannot be over-emphasized. The item, *per se*, is in full harmony with the very basic objectives for which the United Nations was established over 27 years ago.

43. It is an undisputed fact that the urge for peace has never before been so emphatically and eloquently expressed as it is in the inspiring words of the Charter of the United Nations.

44. In Article 1 the Charter emphasizes that the responsibilities of the Organization shall be to maintain international peace and security and to develop friendly relations among nations. It stresses the need for the achievement of international co-operation in solving the economic, social and cultural problems among nations through humanitarian means, so that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms might be encouraged and promoted. Finally, and for the enhancement of these lofty aims, the Charter charges the United Nations to become a forum for harmonizing the actions of nations.

45. It is of interest to note that the Organization was born at a time when mankind everywhere on the face of the globe stood in dire need of fostering and maintaining international peace and security and of eliminating the causes of conflict and tension among them. Indeed, there was a need for all States to recognize and observe the principles of the Charter and the fundamental rules of law

among nations; to promote and respect the rights of all peoples and remove colonialism and all forms of racial discrimination with a view to aiding and supporting the efforts of those peoples who were still shrouded, as it were, in the yoke of colonialism, so that they could gain their national freedom and independence; to put an end to the race among the big Powers in the manufacture of arms—particularly nuclear weapons—so that total disarmament might be achieved. There was also a need—even more urgent—to intensify co-operation among all nations on the economic, social, technological and cultural levels with a view to removing the gap between the developed and the developing nations.

46. It cannot be denied that the United Nations has carried out this important assignment to a significant extent. Certainly the many resolutions and decisions that have been adopted by the world body have, to some extent, improved the political and economic situation among nations and, in this way, reduced international tension. The Organization has also played a positive role in the process of the liberation of peoples from colonial domination.

47. It must be admitted, however, viewing the activities of the world body retrospectively—particularly in comparison with the desired results—that there is much left to be done and perhaps it should properly be said that, despite the relentless efforts it has exerted over the years in drafting and adopting countless resolutions, its short-comings could weigh heavily against its achievements. Unfortunately, the hard fact is that the high objectives of the Charter are still far from being truly recognized, accepted and established among the nations of the world in their relations with each other. Tensions caused by armed conflicts are still to be found in various parts of the world, resulting in the loss of thousands and perhaps millions of lives and inestimable quantities of material wealth. The arms race continues at an alarming pace, with the resultant effect of diminishing the chances of international peace and security. In some areas of the world, while the rights and liberties of the vast majority of the indigenous inhabitants are still being suppressed by the will of the negligible minority, racial discrimination—without regard to and in defiance of the Charter—remains the rule rather than the exception.

48. Alas, it must be said that the seeming acquiescence by the United Nations in this unwholesome situation over such a long period of time has but hardened the hands and hearts of those simple minorities and made them adamant in their refusal to accept as wholesome and realistic the viewpoints of these great majorities. From the surrounding circumstances it must be logically deduced that those who have perpetrated and continue to perpetrate these injustices have done so only in blatant obliviousness of the fact that the right of the individual to state his viewpoint and the civil injunction on society to consider that viewpoint is of intrinsic value to our democratic institution. As it has done in the past, my delegation wishes to state that it considers the right of all peoples to be consulted and to be allowed to contribute fruitfully to the solution of the general problems of the society in which they live to be a necessary measure for the creation of that spirit of understanding and co-operation which alone engenders success in all endeavours.

49. As a founding Member of the United Nations, we have participated in and followed with keen interest the deliberations of this great Organization. Despite the presence of the many pitfalls which have contributed and continue to contribute to its failures, the United Nations—it is our sincerest belief—can become an efficient and effective instrument through which mankind can find peace. My delegation will, therefore, lend its unflinching support to the adoption of the draft resolution already submitted by 32 Member States.

50. It is the candid opinion of my delegation that the United Nations has entered a period which demands stronger and more determined action and now, as never before, the call to awaken it from its seeming self-indulgence, the call to fire it with the ambition of becoming conscious of and alert to the noble obligations enshrined in its Charter, must be made with deserved emphasis and in unison with all its peace-loving Members. Let us, as peace-loving nations, rededicate ourselves to the service of mankind by strengthening the role of this institution and its specialized agencies by coming face to face with the realities which the changes of our times are presenting. Let us make bold to declare, in the words of Dr. Frederick Ewen in one of his works on Heinrich Heine, who was commonly known in modern European history as “humanity’s soldier”, that we have never gloried in mere academic deliberations but have been good soldiers in the wars of human liberation and that our actions must, therefore, be reflected in the firm conviction that it will be a lovely day when human freedom, peace and security become the right and concern of all peoples everywhere.

Mr. Solano-Lopez (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

51. Mr. VINCI (Italy): Not more than two months ago the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Medici, speaking from this rostrum in the course of the general debate, had the opportunity to stress the position of our Government on the problem of the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in international relations. He said then:

“We think it is our duty to ask ourselves whether the structure of the United Nations can fulfil [its] present tasks. The Italian Government believes that, while fully respecting the purposes and principles of the Charter as they stand, some structures of our Organization must be adjusted to the new realities and to the new requirements which have arisen during the past 25 years. . . .

“ . . .

“The role of the United Nations and of its specialized agencies is ever growing and unique. In order to be increasingly able to deal with the deep-rooted causes of international tension, the United Nations must enlarge its decision-making process by associating the emerging countries with it. At the same time the United Nations must obtain the co-operation of the . . . world.” [2044th meeting, paras. 84 and 89.]

52. The Italian Government has therefore welcomed the Romanian initiative in proposing the inclusion of the item we are now dealing with in the agenda of the present

session of the General Assembly. As has already been underlined by previous speakers, we subsequently noted with satisfaction that our Romanian colleagues, in following up their initiative, consulted with as many delegations as possible, showing that spirit of co-operation and mutual understanding which is in keeping with the principles of the Charter and makes our deliberations more successful.

53. That approach and that spirit of co-operation with regard to United Nations activities were recently reiterated in the course of the conversations which took place in Bucharest between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Romania and Italy and were clearly announced in the final joint communiqué issued on 11 November 1972, from which I would quote the following:

“The two Ministers stressed the importance which Italy and Romania attached to the strengthening of the effectiveness of the United Nations as an instrument for the strengthening of international peace and security.”³

54. We have also noted with satisfaction that the final text submitted to us is not merely a declaratory draft resolution but rather one that is bound to draw the increasing attention of Member States to problems of great importance for our Organization. In fact, we find in the text many of the elements required to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

55. To begin with, if we want the United Nations to remain an instrument for that task and for the economic and social progress of all peoples, we must reaffirm the fundamental principles of international law regarding relations among States: respect for national integrity, non-interference in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of a State, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, and the obligation to refrain from the use or threat of force. Furthermore we have to adjust the Organization’s structures and instruments to make it more capable of attaining those objectives. We believe, for example, that it would be useful to adjust the structures and functioning of the Security Council in order to ensure the more systematic participation of States which are in a better position to assume responsibility for the maintenance of peace.

56. The structures and the functioning of the Economic and Social Council also should be adjusted. Its enlargement, approved at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly [resolution 2847 (XXVI)], was a significant improvement making for the greater effectiveness of that body. However, further action is now necessary in order to strengthen the authority and prestige of the Council and to give it the greater efficiency required by new circumstances. Some suggestions have been made to that effect, and it cannot be forgotten that the Economic and Social Council, as the organ institutionally entrusted with international economic and social co-operation and economic development and social justice within the sphere of the United Nations, has at its disposal, thanks also to further appropriate amendments of the Charter, suitable instruments to bring about improvements in the work of the specialized agencies and the other organs of the system, in order to

³ Quoted in French by the speaker.

reduce the risk of the dispersion of resources and energies and to encourage the rationalization of this system so that that Council could, for economic and social questions, become the equivalent of the Security Council.

57. There are other fields, namely, the peace-keeping operations and the codification of international law, where further progress in setting up appropriate machinery could help the United Nations to achieve its objectives and perform its important task in a more satisfactory way.

58. For all the reasons I have indicated and tried to illustrate, the Italian delegation has decided to support and become a sponsor of the draft resolution introduced by the Permanent Representative of Romania [A/L.684 and Add.1-4]. We hope it will receive the affirmative vote of the general membership.

59. Our wish is that the Secretary-General, whose dynamic actions for the strengthening of the United Nations we have had the opportunity to appreciate in the course of this year, will receive many answers from Member States expressing their points of view on this subject. We hope, consequently, that at its next session the General Assembly may already have a basis on which to work out more precise recommendations and select those measures capable of giving a new impetus, new momentum and greater strength to the action of the United Nations.

60. For our part we would prefer that the efforts aimed at strengthening the Organization should be directed with priority to those measures able to command the largest possible support among Member States. That kind of approach is in itself a way of strengthening the United Nations and, consequently, its role in international relations.

61. Mr. PEREZ DE CUELLAR (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Peru, which is one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.684 and Add.1-4 regarding agenda item 24, which has been so wisely proposed by the delegation of Romania, wishes to express briefly some of its ideas on the strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States.

62. At first glance this item might be considered to be repetitive and superfluous; but a second look inevitably leads one to discover that in fact it constitutes a signal and an invitation to action to defend this Organization from the constant accusations of inoperativeness and the inevitable temptation to become excessively routine and bureaucratic.

63. We therefore believe that this draft resolution, which is the result of serious thinking and judicious consultations, constitutes a first but far-reaching step towards the strengthening of United Nations action, and we also believe that in order to emphasize its significance it should be adopted by acclamation by this Assembly.

64. It will be asserted, it is true, that the Charter and, among many others, resolution 2625 (XXV), by which the General Assembly approved the Declaration on Principles

of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, already contain the elements necessary to achieve the objectives stated in the item with which we are dealing. But what we are trying to do can be expressed in one word, and that is the key to the effectiveness of our Organization: implementation—that is to say, to carry out the decisions, recommendations, the good ideas and excellent purposes proclaimed daily in the various forms of the United Nations. We must therefore take up the challenge of those who, with increasing severity, denigrate our work, and take an honest inward look in order to recognize and identify our short-comings, and then seek the appropriate ways of remedying them, and finally strive to apply those remedies.

65. My delegation considers that at the present historical moment—when the last remnants of the cold war are being swept away, when all the peoples of the world have regained full awareness of their rights and are struggling resolutely to defend them, when the Organization is about to attain its full universality and become a true expression of the international community, when its tasks are broadened by major items such as the environment, population growth and the complete and sovereign exploitation by States of their natural resources—we must make a great effort to adopt the United Nations machinery to its new and immense responsibilities.

66. In Chapter I of the Charter, as we all know, we find a perfect announcement of the philosophical, legal and political bases which should be the inspiration, guide and purpose of all Member States. This is recalled very well in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, which recognizes that it is imperative that the Organization should become a more effective instrument to safeguard and strengthen the independence and sovereignty of all States, as well as the inalienable right of every people to decide its own destiny without any outside interference, and that it should take firm action, in accordance with the Charter, for the prevention and suppression of acts of aggression or any other acts which may jeopardize international peace and security.

67. But the review, or inward look, to which I have referred must not be diverted by already accepted formulations, but should lead us to determine, in the first place, whether the short-comings of the United Nations are the consequence of an improper or incomplete use of its machinery and, secondly, if it is insufficient to correct those faults, then judiciously to undertake such major changes of the Charter as may appear necessary. We should not be alarmed at a possible amendment of the Charter, since it has already been amended, although only procedurally, almost exclusively because of the needs of our numerical growth.

68. In the opinion of my delegation, since it is necessary for us to readjust our working methods and strengthen the functions of the Secretary-General, and even make some cautious modifications of the Charter, basically we must change the political will of Governments so that they will firmly support the Organization and capture the interest of public opinion among the Member States by intense publicity on the work already accomplished. We believe that no one has the right to proclaim the existence of a

crisis of confidence in the United Nations when not all Governments comply with or assist in the observance of the mandates of the Charter and the decisions of the Security Council, nor heed the recommendations of the Assembly, and when not all the international conflicts and major problems which jeopardize the maintenance of peace and security are brought before the Organization.

69. How can we undertake theoretical analysis of the Charter and of the decisions and resolutions of United Nations organs when the great Powers have not put an end to the nuclear arms race or terminated all testing of offensive and defensive nuclear weapons systems; when oppression continues in southern Africa and peoples remain under the colonial yoke, discriminated against in their own land for reasons of race? How can we keep giving lip-service to the ideal of full development when there still persist abysmal differences which divide the rich from the poor countries—not because of the greater industry of some and the inability of others, but because of the intolerable permanence of systems of exploitation; and when some who are powerful detain or delay the progress of developing peoples, and even threaten or punish them for struggling to survive by the fruit of their natural resources, which the greed of the strong wishes to keep taking from them?

70. Let us therefore commit ourselves to the serious study and arduous task which this important item requires; let us determine the defects of our Organization, rapidly seek solutions to them, and, as toilers for peace, restore the great edifice, but without forgetting even for an instant that it is the only, and perhaps last, refuge for free and equal co-operation among all peoples of the earth.

71. Mr. KEDADI (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): Since its accession to independence in 1956, Tunisia has never failed to celebrate United Nations Day on 24 October every year, thus reaffirming its dedication to this Organization and its sincere desire to see it play its proper role in the concert of nations in order to eliminate the causes of conflict and tension and to create the necessary conditions for fruitful co-operation and lasting peace and security in the world.

72. Furthermore, in both its bilateral and its multilateral relations, whether at the regional or at the international level, Tunisia has always followed a consistent line of conduct characterized by its unshakable faith in the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter and symbolized by the lofty moral values defended by the Organization and its various agencies.

73. It is fitting, moreover, to point out that since 1961 the delegation of Tunisia has made concrete proposals for the improvement of the working methods of the Organization, and in 1970 we had the honour of participating in the work of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, which was entrusted with rationalizing United Nations activities in order to strengthen the role of the Organization in the solution of international problems.

74. For all those reasons, my country has always shared the growing concern of a large number of Member States at the United Nations inability to solve world conflicts when

under the Charter it is called upon to play a paramount role in international relations.

75. Thus the delegation of Tunisia has never failed to contribute fully to any constructive proposal designed to increase the role and effectiveness of the Organization in contemporary international relations. We congratulate the Romanian delegation for having specifically focused the attention of Member States on this urgent and complex problem by submitting its draft resolution [*A/L.684 and Add.1-4*], to which my delegation now lends its full support.

76. The world has never so desperately needed an Organization whose existence expresses not Utopia but the greatest international reality. Public opinion is still very sceptical on this subject. Public opinion continues to believe that the United Nations is an ideal forum for all sorts of propaganda manoeuvres and that the majority of the resolutions adopted are already predestined never to be implemented. In fact, one is therefore entitled to wonder what would be the purpose of such a rhetorical exercise and of prior consultations when it would have been so much easier to adopt fewer decisions, but ones whose immediate implementation would have done the greatest good to mankind.

77. It is the opinion of many delegations that this relative effectiveness is due to the present structure of the United Nations, which was conceived of in a political context that has been largely superseded, and that therefore it would be fitting to think seriously of an adjustment of the Organization and an adaptation of its organs to the new situation created by the existence of a larger number of Member States and increased diversity in the problems to be considered. It can be hoped that the committee which will deal with the provisions for a conference to review the Charter will find the appropriate formula to that end. Similarly, the declarations adopted by the Organization of African Unity [*OAU*] as well as by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries at Georgetown underscored the political will of the countries of the third world to bring new life to the Organization.

78. In this connexion the delegation of Tunisia wishes to emphasize the primary role which regional groups could play by proposing and adopting specific measures to increase the capacity for action of the United Nations and its effectiveness for the peaceful settlement of international problems, in accordance with the principles of the Charter and the legitimate aspirations of peoples. Up to now, in fact, the activity of regional groups has been intense when draft resolutions on specific problems were submitted or when a vacant seat in the Organization was to be filled; but nothing, or almost nothing, has yet been advocated regionally to ensure a continued growth of the United Nations role in international life so that it can effectively respond to the aspirations of all peoples for peace, liberty and progress. Indeed, we believe that our Organization should be the symbol of the collective need for peace required by mankind to survive, a need which would go beyond the national or ideological interests of a given Member State and which would lead to the prestige of our Organization being unanimously accepted and its moral authority being universally unchallenged.

79. Both in the explanatory memorandum regarding the request for the inclusion in the agenda of the item before us, in document A/8792, as well as in draft resolution A/L.684, the delegation of Romania had carefully explained the reasons for its request, highlighting the conditions that must be achieved in order to ensure the complete success of this delicate undertaking. Among these, the delegation of Romania mentions, in the explanatory memorandum:

“The final elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, racism and all forms of racial discrimination; firm support for the struggle of the peoples for their national freedom and independence and against colonial domination . . . [A/8792, para. 4 (e)].

In the same document reference is made to:

“The economic and social progress of the developing countries, the reduction and elimination of the gap between them and the industrialized States; the establishment of multilateral programmes to support the efforts of the developing countries—to the implementation of which the developed countries would be required to make a substantial contribution.” [Ibid., para. 4 (g).]

80. The delegation of Tunisia regrets that these two objectives which have been repeatedly supported by relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council do not appear in the draft resolution.

81. We believe, in fact, that recognizing and unreservedly consecrating the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination, the right to struggle for national liberation and the right of self-defence constitute a fundamental condition for the maintenance of international peace and security.

82. We are similarly convinced that real economic co-operation based on the principle of collective responsibility and of international solidarity would eliminate every source of rancour in the world and would establish an atmosphere propitious to the promotion of friendly relations between States.

83. Nevertheless, we understand full well the reasons which have prevented the sponsors from taking into account those objectives which our Organization seeks to achieve in the best conditions.

84. We are grateful to the delegation of Romania for its valuable contribution and we express the hope that all Member States, whether at the national or regional level, will respond favourably to its appeal for closer and more fruitful co-operation in this field, in particular by expressing their assurance that they will unequivocally fulfil their commitments contracted under the Charter and their determination to apply in good faith and without reticence the decisions and recommendations adopted by our Organization.

85. We cannot despair of the wisdom of men who are responsible not only for their own peoples but also for the future of all mankind.

86. Mr. RAJASOMBAT (Laos) (*interpretation from French*): Since 20 November [2086th meeting] the General Assembly has been discussing a most important item of our agenda. Since the start of this debate, my delegation has listened with great interest and attention to the statements made by several delegations, including that of the Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to whom I should like, incidentally, to extend the sincere congratulations of my delegation for having this item, which is of the utmost interest for the future of our Organization, placed on the agenda.

87. The various statements heard so far have brought out the need for an urgent examination and broad consultation among all Member States, for the purpose, in the view of most of them, of endeavouring without further delay to restore the full authority of our Organization, so that it may be enabled in full sovereignty and in conformity with the Charter to carry out the lofty mission which was solemnly entrusted to it at the time it was created.

88. Our Organization, as we all know, was created amidst the enthusiasm of an illusory peace bitterly attained at the end of an appalling world war, a war terminated only by the costly and tragic sacrifice imposed on the innocent population of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thus offered up as an expiatory holocaust.

89. My visual and auditory memory still clearly recalls the visions and the apocalyptic effects as well as the indescribable sense of horror and misery reported by the spoken and written news media on the day following the tragic end of that dreadful war.

90. Thus created, our Organization now finds itself in an alarming crisis of authority and in the position of being incapable of preventing a repetition of that tragedy of Hiroshima in other parts of the world—not overlooking Indo-China, where an almost comparable tragedy, which began more than two decades ago, is continuing to this date, a tragedy now more terrible than at its beginning and more ruthless than ever—this despite the international undertakings concluded in Geneva in 1954 and 1962.

91. Nevertheless, despite this unconscionable state of affairs, my delegation continues to share the common hope expressed here with sympathetic commiseration by many representatives, to whom I should like to address our feelings of sincere appreciation and gratitude, that the talks now going on in Paris will, favoured by international *détente*, enable all those concerned, in what we hope will be the near future, to undertake the definitive settlement of the conflict, no longer through the dialogue of arms, but, as our Charter prescribes, by the continuation of a peaceful and magnanimous dialogue between the parties at issue.

92. In participating in this debate my delegation, a loyal Member of our Organization and one that respects its Charter, would like to say that it is aware of the modest and limited role it is called upon to play in it. Nevertheless, we entirely associate ourselves with the general concern to enhance the authority of the United Nations, a concern expressed by our Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council in their exchange of letters on this

worrisome subject last October, when the latter, expressing his concern at the Organization's weakness, wrote:

"The Security Council shares the concern expressed unanimously by the General Assembly to see the Organization discharge its mission of 'saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war'".⁴

93. I should like also, in taking part in the consideration of this great issue, to express the fear that I may be charged with presumptuousness. Indeed, I must admit that it may seem both presumptuous and pretentious for a small country, classified, as we are, among the 25 most under-developed countries, to take part with other Powers and super-Powers in such an auspicious debate to seek out ways and means of ensuring the maintenance and consolidation of peace and security on our planet.

94. Nevertheless, all things considered, it seems to me more than ever timely for smaller States like mine thus to demonstrate their sincere, deep and legitimate concern to see the Organization of which they have the honour to be Members and whose triumphs and trials they share based on strong authority, respected and feared, and to see it discharge its lofty mission in the fullness of the powers entrusted to it by the Charter. And it may well be that as small countries we might have an entirely different viewpoint from that of others on this question of peace and security, having for some time now had to face directly multiple problems relating to peace and security, problems which are linked inextricably to the causes of the tragic and painful miseries that have afflicted the countries of Indo-China, including my own, for more than two decades.

95. In seeking the causes of the crisis of authority now afflicting the United Nations and the way to restore that authority, and while sharing the concern expressed by the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, some delegations in their statements have sharply emphasized the unfortunate consequences of this crisis of authority. On this subject, our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Romania, stated in his statement of 20 November:

"But, unfortunately, many of its decisions"—that is, decisions of the United Nations—"have not been carried out, or have been only partially implemented; certain important resolutions adopted by our Organization have not had a positive impact on the evolution of international life, and very often are ignored in practice."
[2086th meeting, para. 16.]

96. I should like to take the occasion of this debate to express my delegation's opinion as to the malaise which prevails in our Organization whenever steps must be taken to settle the matters before it for consideration. For it is this malaise which, beyond doubt, is largely responsible for the attenuated authority of the Secretary-General and, consequently, for the crisis of authority of the United Nations. We see an example of that malaise in our debate on the question of disarmament. We know that, despite the

efforts made by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament for over 12 years now, it has not yet been, and may never be, possible to settle this question, whose discussion is hampered by political-military, economic and moral imperatives, and also and above all by the war of words, the effects of which were so well emphasized by Ambassador Bush, the permanent representative of the United States, in his statement from this rostrum on 24 November [2088th meeting]. For indeed, this war of words, which goes on within and outside our Organization, is, in my humble opinion, a fundamental cause of the malaise which prevails here and in the world. Yet words are not instruments of discord, but rather a means of peace and concord. It was the proper use of words which initiated the international *détente* which we are witnessing, thanks to the summit dialogue in Peking and Moscow.

97. It is also thanks to the methodical, courageous, sincere, honest and compassionate dialogues that *détente* was begun between the two Germanys and the two Koreas and perhaps will also begin between the fraternal peoples of Indo-China, now enemies.

98. Since the war of words is recognized as a main cause of the deterioration of human relations and, consequently, one of the sure causes of the attenuated role of our Organization, a role which we are now trying to strengthen particularly as regards the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, I shall try to submit briefly for the Assembly's kind consideration my humble questions and suggestions.

99. Since the methodical practice of dialogue contains elements giving rise to *détente*, we must of necessity therefore have recourse systematically, and on a large scale, to dialogue in relations between men and, to start with, within this very Organization, so that we may achieve *détente* and *entente* here first, then gradually reduce the intensity of the war of words and arrive progressively at freedom from the fear of that war and, finally, to a definitive cease-fire. Was not an initial result obtained when, thanks to the practice of contact, that is, dialogue with various delegations, particularly with those of the great Powers, the President of our group, the representative of Zaire, managed to put through our resolution on disarmament to the general satisfaction?

100. Yes, if dialogue must, through its admitted advantages, be a necessary method in human relations and particularly in relations between States, then we must prepare ourselves for it, not only in the present but also for the future. This form of relationship requires on the part of those who are called upon to undertake dialogue a will to courtesy, respect, sympathy and kindness. It precludes *a priori* any recrimination or prejudice or offensive polemic, as well as useless and wordy talk. It does not seek to bring about the immediate conversion of the interlocutors, whose dignity and freedom must be respected. It does, however, look for an eventual understanding and a closer harmony of feeling and conviction and, if dialogue is to be accepted in today's world, it must be practised at all levels. A sincere dialogue often engenders appreciation and mutual respect and may also give rise to a feeling of tacit friendship and fraternity which makes possible its progression towards a possible *entente*.

⁴ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-seventh Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1972*, document S/10822.

101. Furthermore, dialogue in its interstate form must not be interpreted as an attempt at espionage, to feel out weak points in order subsequently to attack and destroy the arguments presented. Dialogue should not be a form of apologia for the purpose of demonstrating that the interlocutor is wrong. This means of persuasion through the will to power is a disease peculiar to words, to human language. It is a diplomatic form habitually used in order to defend, safeguard and put across one's own positions. Dialogue must not be a quest for prestige, above all when the power of States is in general in decline within nations. Dialogue is, in sum, a reciprocal exchange of views in order to know one another better, to live in harmony, to co-operate sincerely in common fields and to make common progress. It must be carried on in a climate of friendship and charity. It is a form of unselfish co-operation freely undertaken and, finally, a form of mutual service.

102. There are other forms of dialogue between individuals, between political and social groups and so forth which, in order to be human, must be duly adapted to assist in the true education of man and his development. For example, the school, the factory and the army offer opportunities for useful and beneficial dialogue at all levels.

103. But while dialogue—judging from what we see every day even in this Assembly—does have advantages, there are also difficulties, as is to be expected. There are, first, difficulties due to individual behaviour. Then there are positions and attitudes which can easily block any attempt at dialogue. There are also difficulties owing to racial, cultural and ideological diversity. These difficulties become far more serious when one considers only one's own conceptions and general view of things to the detriment of the views of others.

104. Dialogue, whose purposes we have just indicated, must be utilized as a matter of urgency in order to improve human relations and to plan these relations with a view to strengthening the role of our Organization.

105. Despite the difficulties in the way of dialogue, there nevertheless are, in my humble opinion, opportunities to engage in it usefully, since the men of this world generally face similar problems and their solutions are usually almost identical. These common problems should therefore stimulate a willingness to understand one another, particularly among young people, who in our time have wide possibilities for study and travel throughout the world, thanks to scholarships and modern educational and communication techniques. These possibilities are fulfilled when one partner dares to take the initiative. The summit meetings in Peking and Moscow—to mention only those—clearly illustrate what I have been suggesting.

106. Before concluding my statement in this debate, a debate which I seem perhaps to have set aside, having embarked somewhat too enthusiastically on a demonstration of the advantages and possibilities of profitable and useful dialogue, I should like to add that each of us—each representative—should serve as an agent of dialogue, a leader in dialogue and, being called upon to engage in it, we should prepare ourselves accordingly. I should be very happy and grateful for any initiative which might be taken with your approval, Mr. President, either by the Secretary-

General or by a Member of our Organization, to carry further this matter which I have described as the art of dialogue, with its possible application in contemporary human relations.

107. In closing my statement, I can only reiterate what I have said about dialogue and its reconciling virtues—fair, frank and generous dialogue, which, in my delegation's view, may be considered as a means to help dispel the malaise which afflicts our Organization and to promote the general *détente* now dawning. Without general and complete *détente* it would, I believe, be impossible to strengthen the role of our Organization.

108. Another means would be, in the general view, to use resolutions to thwart the policies of power and domination exercised by the Powers and super-Powers. At this stage of world history, fraught with mistrust, suspicion, hatred and neo-barbarism, as Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, said in her statement on 2 November at the 1882nd meeting of the First Committee in characterizing the spiritual decadence caused by the progress of science without conscience, it is almost unthinkable, in our humble opinion, that the great Powers can be prevailed upon to undertake general and complete disarmament. Perhaps we, the small countries, under-developed and powerless as we are, should show the way; and this way would be, since we cannot disarm the others, to first disarm ourselves. Let us then disarm, let us divest ourselves of whatever ill will may beset any of us, so that we may ease the sorrows of our world, which in so many places and in so many ways is rent by discord, torn by hatred and victimized by the evil of its own sons, which is indeed in danger of perishing beyond redemption.

109. Let us think for a moment of the indescribable misfortune which threatens our planet. Let us think above all of the weak, of the poor, of those who struggle, who tremble, who suffer and who pray; let us think of the refugees, of those who are the victims of wars, revolutions and natural disasters; let us think of the prisoners, the exiles, the expatriates, the uprooted, the divided, the sick, the suffering; let us think of the widows and the orphans who languish in poverty, threatened by terrorism and genocide, who live in the deepest despair. Our supreme duty is to see to it that, through our common accord, this unhappy and suffering humanity may find in this Assembly its refuge, its spokesman and its saviour; and let us act so that the sunlight of truth may dawn on the world, so that, in measured tranquillity, the blessings of peace may reach from one end of the world to the other. Finally, let us think of our children, the young people of the world, who, in the present disarray, are also seeking the way. Let us act so that our Organization may be for them the universal city to which they will come, in their turn, to find the truth, the way and life itself; where they will chant together a hymn of glory, of love and of gratitude in memory of those who preceded them there.

110. To conclude this prayer which I am offering up in your presence, may my delegation be permitted to say the following. Let us first accept the method of dialogue and compassion; the strengthening of the role of our Organization and the general and complete disarmament we all desire—all this will follow therefrom.

111. Mr. KARHILO (Finland): The Finnish delegation has through the years consistently underlined the importance it attaches to proposals which aim at the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in international relations. The item proposed by the Romanian delegation [A/8792] gives us another welcome opportunity to reaffirm Finland's strong and active commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, and to the United Nations as the principal instrument available to nations for keeping peace in the world.

112. We are witnessing today a profound change in international relations. This change is characterized, above all, by an increased search for dialogue between the great Powers in order to solve international problems. As we understand it, it is against that background that the Secretary-General has, in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization [A/8701/Add.1], raised some fundamental and timely questions concerning the future role of the United Nations in the political process of establishing and maintaining international peace and security.

113. It is common knowledge that the collective security system of the United Nations has not functioned as it was intended to function when it was created in 1945. It is true that no nation today can depend on the United Nations for its security; and yet we all know that genuine international security can be built only upon universal respect for the fundamental principles of the Charter, which enjoins States to refrain from the use or the threat of force and from intervention in the internal affairs of others and to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of each other.

114. It is in that spirit that the Finnish Foreign Minister stated in the general debate this year:

"The efforts by the major Powers to contribute to a lessening of tension should not be seen as an alternative to the functions of the United Nations as an instrument for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Rather, we would see them as an effort to overcome the lack of agreement which has so often manifested itself in the past between the major Powers and has prevented them from making full use of this Organization for the purpose for which it was originally created." [2045th meeting, para. 205.]

115. The Finnish delegation has stated on many occasions that, in our view, the collective security system of the United Nations cannot be truly effective if it is not universal. We realize only too well that universality by itself will solve neither existing nor future problems of international security. But we are convinced that it is a necessary prerequisite for making the United Nations a truly effective instrument for peace. For that reason we welcomed last year the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in this Organization [resolution 2758 (XXVI)]. And for the same reason the United Nations should, we believe, make an active effort to admit all the other countries that still remain outside its walls.

116. Another essential prerequisite for the effective functioning of the world Organization is to find a solution to its

financial difficulties. If the Member States want the United Nations to have an active role to play in international relations, it is up to them to provide it with adequate material means. In this respect the Special Committee on the Financial Situation of the United Nations has presented some valuable ideas to us in its report [A/8729]. The Finnish delegation fully shares the recommendations made by the Committee for overcoming the present difficulties through voluntary contributions. We note, however, that only a regular and secure financial basis can guarantee the effectiveness of future activities.

117. Declarations and resolutions on how to strengthen the role of our Organization provide only the basis on which we can proceed. In the months to come we should concentrate on practical measures put forward by various delegations during past years, all aiming at improving the position of the United Nations in international politics. Such proposals as the strengthening of the role of the Security Council, including the holding of periodic meetings and making appropriate use of its subsidiary organs; the improvement of the peace-making and peace-keeping mechanism of the Organization; the revitalization of the role of the International Court of Justice, and the adoption of an urgent resolution of the financial crisis of the Organization, all merit our full consideration.

118. It is the hope of my delegation that all these both actually and potentially important and practical proposals will, *inter alia*, be kept constantly in mind when we consider ways and means to improve the functioning of the Organization and to make it more relevant to our times. I am sure that in the forthcoming replies of Governments under this item there will be other constructive thoughts available for our consideration at the next session of the General Assembly. It is expected that a general review that will concentrate on strengthening the role of the United Nations will follow. Let our imagination and resolution, then, be sparked into concrete action.

119. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): The Charter of the United Nations has been described as a life-giving constitution for a world community designed to endure for ages to come.

120. The test of an international instrument which is designed to regulate a world order is whether it is flexible enough to meet the needs of a rapidly developing and constantly changing world.

121. Peace and security are the main goals of the Charter. The economic and social aims, however, are not of any less importance. The sovereign State is still the unit of membership. All organs of the United Nations are composed of independent and equally sovereign States. The Security Council, however, is an organ where the five permanent members have additional powers and responsibilities.

122. As is well known, the powers of the Security Council have not become real and consistently effective on matters pertaining to international peace and security. They can become real only if the conditions for their exercise are fulfilled. This presupposes agreement on the largest issues of peace and security among the permanent members of the Security Council.

123. The organs of the United Nations operate within the context of the obligations and policies of the Member States. Unfortunately, some Member States have not taken their obligations seriously; others have pursued policies which are at variance with the basic tenets and principles of the Charter.

124. One would not be exaggerating if one said that, on the whole, the United Nations is a body which has acted and reacted and derived its greatest strength from the active participation and support of the emerging nations. The industrialized and colonial Powers frequently resented the growing influence of the emerging nations within the world Organization. The assumption of larger responsibilities by the emerging nations implied a diminution of the ascendancy of the big Powers and colonial systems.

125. One of the most glorious tributes one could pay to the United Nations is that it accelerated the pace of decolonization and that it made it possible for the emerging nations to swell the ranks of the United Nations and to place their moral, if not material, force at the disposal of the United Nations in promoting the noble ideals enshrined in the Charter.

126. The United Nations also deserves much credit for its role in fostering economic growth and social progress. Thanks to the continuing zeal of the developing countries it has been possible to supplement the network of organizations with much-needed bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and now, most recently, the Governing Council on the United Nations Environment Programme.

127. The Members of the United Nations pledge themselves under the Charter to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization for the promotion of higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development, and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language and religion.

128. Progress achieved, or to be achieved, in this field, however, depends on the responsiveness of the Members, particularly the developed and industrially advanced countries, to a sense of obligation to the world community to make such growth and change possible. The developing countries have been trying for years to make a reality of those provisions. Their efforts have consistently been thwarted by the reluctance of the developed countries to accept special obligations concerning economic and social policy. The best example is the attitude of the developed countries towards the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade [resolution 2626 (XXV)], which was originally envisaged as a concrete programme of actions based on firm commitments by developed and developing countries to undertake concerted measures in a joint effort to eliminate once and for all economic and social backwardness and poverty.

129. Both in the field of economic policy and in the protection of human rights the potential of the United

Nations is great while the results so far achieved have been unsatisfactory. In the field of economic policy the gap between the poor and the rich countries continues to widen; the problems of the developing countries are compounded by a population increase and an insufficiency of capital and technology to develop resources at the same rate. Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish economist, ascribed the fundamental difficulty to the fact that "nations are not prepared in peacetime to accept the degree of international human solidarity which would make possible progress towards international economic integration".⁵

130. The United Nations has many worthy exploits to its credit in the field of human rights. The most effective means of promoting human rights so far has been the adoption of international treaties that codify the practice of the United Nations in this urgent sphere, which had been much neglected in the past. However, it is a sad fact of international life that the signature and ratification of treaties depends on the volition of States. The effectiveness of covenants on human rights depends on the extent to which they are ratified, or on their being ratified without reservations which weaken their provisions. Even when covenants enter into force, one witnesses a strong contrast between their lofty provisions and the manner in which they are applied.

131. The work of the United Nations is still lagging behind in the sphere of science and technology. The United Nations is moving slowly towards grappling with such difficult problems as the constant erosion, exhaustion and waste of natural resources, in addition to the problem of the exploration and exploitation of natural resources. My delegation whole-heartedly endorses the principle that all countries have sovereignty over their natural resources. At the same time we earnestly believe that the United Nations can redouble its efforts in the sphere of the conservation and national exploitation of natural resources. The United Nations is also belatedly tackling the problem of ecology and the human environment. Though the pace is slow, we hope that the results will be encouraging.

132. The United Nations has also been the centre of activities pertaining to such new and unprecedented areas as outer space and the sea-bed. We hope that the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea will prove to be a success and that it will be possible to set up an international machinery with extensive regulatory and operational functions to act as the administrator of a trust for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

133. In addition to sharing benefits equitably among all States, especially among the developing countries, the international machinery should allocate a reasonable portion of the benefits derived from sea-bed exploitation to the purpose of development within the aegis of the United Nations system and to helping the world Organization to solve its present financial crisis and avoid a recurrence of it. I dwell on this point because most of the problems of the United Nations and the world at large can be attributed to lack of resources and the attempts of the rich to impose their will on the poor. The sea-bed can be the starting point

⁵ See Gunnar Myrdal, *An International Economy* (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 315.

of rescuing the developing countries and the United Nations from dependence on a number of Powers which are becoming increasingly parsimonious not only in providing aid but even in paying their regular assessments.

134. May I conclude by saying that the Charter of the United Nations has passed the test of time. Its imperfections are few and are closely linked with the structure of international society and the overbearing attitude of big Powers.

135. We should be failing in our duty if we refrained from paying a tribute to the delegation of Romania for proposing the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the General Assembly. This item is a worthy sequel to the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

136. The draft resolution emphasizes the need to make the United Nations a more effective instrument in promoting the ends and goals of the Charter. My delegation sympathizes with the provision which invites Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General their views and suggestions on ways and means of contributing to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in international life. At this session we are not capable of doing more than treating this matter rather superficially. However, Governments will have an ample opportunity to submit well-considered and concrete proposals for enhancing the effectiveness of the decisions and resolutions adopted by United Nations organs.

137. My delegation, on several occasions, has expressed the view that the Security Council should engage in a process of retrospective meditation and deliberation. We recommended that the Security Council should hold periodic meetings to review its past decisions and those of the General Assembly which pertain to peace and security and to the inalienable rights of peoples. It is still our firm belief that, through a process of review and follow-up, the Security Council should not hesitate to apply enforcement measures against recalcitrant States which refuse to abide by the rule of law and flout the will of the international community. Once more we take this opportunity to appeal to the permanent members of the Security Council to isolate matters of international peace and security from their narrow national interests and not to allow the inalienable rights of peoples to be trodden under the heel of ascendancy and the craving for power.

138. May I end by quoting some pertinent remarks made by Wilfred Jenks in his view of the world beyond the Charter:

“Just law and sound policy are founded in morality. We have the misfortune to live in an age when moral vitality is at a discount; we may call it a morally colourless or toneless age.

“... the question whether the roots of war are to be found in the nature of man, the nature of the State or the nature of international society is a speculative enquiry of little value for the formulation of practical policy. Statesmen will be wise to deduce from experience that the nature of man and the nature of the State involve a continuous danger of war which only a radical change in

the nature of international society can hope to forestall and, while striving for a mellowed maturity in the nature of man and a sophisticated shift of emphasis from preoccupation with power to preoccupation with welfare in the nature of the State, to give the highest priority to effecting such a change in the nature of international society.”⁶

139. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran): If there is any subject which should constantly be reviewed and enjoy priority it is that of strengthening the role of the United Nations with regard to the consolidation of international security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States.

140. Since the question of enhancing the role of the United Nations is a basic and permanent concern of the foreign policy of my country it is with the utmost satisfaction that we note that, thanks to the initiative of the Romanian delegation, this important question is the subject of special attention at the present session of the General Assembly.

141. In the last quarter of a century the world and this Organization have gone through many difficult periods. But even during that time a number of international conflicts and problems have been solved through the efforts of the United Nations. It is our hope that the Organization will continue to contribute to the settling of outstanding issues in the years to come. In this process the United Nations should not be considered as something static, except for its basic purposes and principles. It should be considered not as something static but, rather, as an evolutionary and open-ended Organization, responsive to the constantly changing requirements of international society and the rising expectations of mankind.

142. The United Nations system was conceived and established as a rational response to the evolving problems in international relations. In addressing itself to new conditions in international society the Charter set forth new norms of international behaviour conducive to the stability and security of the nation-State system and in concert with the evolutionary process of human societies as well. To that end the United Nations—as many representatives have said—has not always been successful. However, it still maintains an adaptable constitutional potential and modest organizational capacity, and if there were enough political will it would be able to deal more effectively with existing international problems.

143. During the debates on the subject of the strengthening of international security at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly⁷ and also, some days ago in this Assembly hall, on the question of the non-use of force [2083rd meeting], I had occasion to present the view of my delegation on some of the most important aspects of those problems. I discussed the essential premises of international peace and security. Therefore, I do not think it necessary to review all aspects of the problems which

⁶ See C. Wilfred Jenks, *The World Beyond the Charter* (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969), pp. 132-133.

⁷ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, First Committee*, 1808th meeting.

have caused obstacles in the operation and development of the United Nations. To put it briefly, we are of the opinion that the strengthening of the role of the United Nations first and foremost depends on the strict and effective observance by all countries of the purposes and principles of the Charter, particularly by those countries that enjoy a special status within the Organization and have a correspondingly special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

144. Within this context Governments should confirm their full and unconditional allegiance, in particular to such basic principles of the Charter as respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, renunciation of the threat or use of force, non-intervention, the sovereign equality of States, the self-determination of peoples and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

145. It follows that the second logical step rests upon the rational improvement and development of the existing machinery of the United Nations, particularly that of the collective security mechanism. To that end a number of suggestions have been made, to be applied either simultaneously or successively. One view—and a very important one—is that a fuller utilization of the procedures already made available to the Organization by the Charter as it now stands could better serve our purpose.

146. In our view, a number of steps could be taken, including a correct and rational interpretation of the important concepts and provisions of the Charter by means which the Charter itself provides, such as a clarification of the competence and power of the Security Council and the General Assembly and their relationship, as well as a clarification of the close connexion between peace, security and justice. Another step would be the fuller exploration of the possibilities offered by certain Chapters of the Charter, such as Chapters VI or VII.

147. It is also to be noted that the machinery referred to in Article 43 has never been set up and that other Articles have not been fully implemented.

148. Another avenue which should be explored is the consideration of the system of jurisprudence which has grown up within the United Nations itself. Some valuable experience has been gained in the field of containing and preventing conflicts. We hope this trend will be intensified. For instance, continuing attention should be given to the practice and feasibility of peace-keeping operations, whose effectiveness has been proven on a number of occasions.

149. Finally, international law must also evolve if we are to strengthen the role of the United Nations, for it provides the framework for orderly and peaceful relations among nations.

150. Those are some practical steps which could be taken. As I said, my Government attaches great importance to this subject, which has been raised at this session of the General Assembly thanks to the delegation of Romania, and it is for that reason that we have joined other States in sponsoring the draft resolution introduced a few days ago by the representative of Romania.

151. As I have already mentioned, the effectiveness of the United Nations depends on the will of all its Members to make full use of the possibilities offered, because we believe that the Charter and the institutions set up under it are a sound and practical framework for maintaining international peace and security. Failure comes, not from the machinery itself, but from a lack of the political will to make proper use of it. Without such a will, the United Nations is powerless. But without the United Nations, such a will could not be translated into practice.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.