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President: Mr. Stanisław TREPCZYŃSKI (Poland).

AGENDA ITEM 47

United Nations Conference on the Human Environment:
report of the Secretary-General

REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE (A/8901)

1. Mr. FARHANG (Afghanistan), Rapporteur of the Second Committee: I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the report on agenda item 47 [A/8901]. In paragraph 72 of that report the Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of 11 draft resolutions. Draft resolution I, entitled "United Nations Conference on the Human Environment", was adopted in the Committee by 103 votes to none, with 12 abstentions. Draft resolution II, entitled "Co-operation between States in the field of the environment", was adopted by 114 votes to none, with 10 abstentions. Draft resolution III, entitled "International responsibility of States in regard to the environment", was adopted by 111 votes to none, with 11 abstentions. Draft resolution IV, entitled "Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation", was adopted by 115 votes to none, with 9 abstentions. Draft resolution V, entitled "Criteria governing multilateral financing of housing and human settlements", was adopted in a roll-call vote by 81 votes to none, with 34 abstentions. Draft resolution VI, entitled "Establishment of an international fund or financial institution for human settlements", was adopted in a recorded vote by 82 votes to 6, with 27 abstentions. Draft resolution VII, entitled "Measures for protecting and enhancing the environment", was adopted in a roll-call vote by 103 votes to none, with 13 abstentions. Draft resolution VIII, entitled "United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements", was adopted by 102 votes to none, with 16 abstentions. Draft resolution IX, entitled "Development and environment", was adopted by 85 votes to none, with 21 abstentions. Draft

resolution X, entitled "International prize for the most outstanding contribution in the field of the environment", was adopted by 97 votes to none, with 11 abstentions. And finally, draft resolution XI, entitled "Location of the environment secretariat", was adopted in a recorded vote by 93 votes to none, with 31 abstentions.

Pursuant to rule 68 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss the report of the Second Committee.

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now vote on the 11 draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 72 of document A/8901.

3. The Assembly will first vote on draft resolution I, entitled "United Nations Conference on the Human Environment". The report of the Fifth Committee on the administrative and financial implications of that draft resolution is contained in document A/8972.

Draft resolution I was adopted by 112 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 2994 (XXVII)).

4. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now vote on draft resolution II, entitled "Co-operation between States in the field of the environment".

Draft resolution II was adopted by 115 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 2995 (XXVII)).

5. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now put to the vote draft resolution III, entitled "International responsibility of States in regard to the environment". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Khmer Republic, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South

Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mauritania, Mongolia, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Draft resolution III was adopted by 112 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 2996 (XXVII)).¹

6. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Draft resolution IV is entitled "Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation". The report of the Fifth Committee on the administrative and financial implications of that draft resolution appears in document A/8972.

Draft resolution IV was adopted by 116 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 2997 (XXVII)).

7. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now put to the vote resolution V, entitled "Criteria governing multilateral financing of housing and human settlements".

Draft resolution V was adopted by 96 votes to none, with 29 abstentions (resolution 2998 (XXVII)).

8. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Draft resolution VI is entitled "Establishment of an international fund or financial institution for human settlements". The report of the Fifth Committee on the administrative and financial implications of this draft resolution appears in document A/8972. The Assembly will now vote on this draft resolution.

Draft resolution VI was adopted by 93 votes to 5, with 27 abstentions (resolution 2999 (XXVII)).

9. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Draft resolution VII concerns "Measures for protecting and enhancing the environment". The Assembly will now vote on this resolution.

Draft resolution VII was adopted by 117 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 3000 (XXVII)).

10. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now vote on draft resolution VIII entitled "United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements".

Draft resolution VIII was adopted by 114 votes to none, with 13 abstentions (resolution 3001 (XXVII)).

11. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I shall now put to the vote draft resolution IX entitled "Development and environment".

¹ The delegations of Iraq and Togo subsequently informed the Secretariat that they wished to have their votes recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution IX was adopted by 110 votes to none, with 16 abstentions (resolution 3002 (XXVII)).

12. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will vote now on draft resolution X entitled "International prize for the most outstanding contribution in the field of the environment".

Draft resolution X was adopted by 116 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 3003 (XXVII)).

13. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will vote now on draft resolution XI entitled "Location of the environment secretariat".

Draft resolution XI was adopted by 128 votes to none (resolution 3004 (XXVII)).

14. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote after the vote.

15. Mr. GALLARDO MORENO (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): At the Second Committee's 1479th meeting, when my delegation was commenting on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227—which in the Rapporteur's report is draft resolution II—we said that an interpretation was possible which was not in keeping with the modern concept of responsibility of the States as we understand it or with the views of the overwhelming majority of the international community.

16. Our views are in line with the views of the delegations of Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Australia and Pakistan, which appear in the report of the Second Committee and in its summary records. We endorsed those views and asked that the statement we made at that meeting should appear in the Rapporteur's report.

17. When the Second Committee voted on the draft resolution, to which we have referred, my delegation abstained, so as to be consistent with the position which we stated in our intervention.

18. Together with the delegations of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Panama, my delegation introduced at the Committee's 1478th meeting draft resolution A/C.2/L.1240. This is the draft resolution which appears in the report as draft resolution III. The operative paragraph of this resolution reads:

"Declares that no resolution adopted at the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly can affect principles 21 and 22 of the Declaration on the Human Environment."

19. As draft resolution III was adopted at the Committee's 1479th meeting by 111 votes to none, with 11 abstentions, my delegation has now voted in favour of draft resolution II, because it is now perfectly clear that the latter refers to co-operation among States in the area of the environment, and the implementation of this resolution is not tantamount to the implementation of principles 21 and 22 which I have just mentioned.

20. Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden): My delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolutions V, VI and VIII for reasons of principle. We feel that by accepting those resolutions the General Assembly is acting on parts of the action programme and recommendations that by resolution I it has already decided to refer to the new Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme before that body has been able to discuss them. I should like to add, however, that my delegation has already, at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held at Stockholm in June 1972, stated its reservations as to the establishment of a fund for human settlements² because we feel that such a fund would in no way provide a guarantee for an increase in the total amount of financial assistance to the developing countries in this important field. On the contrary, there is, as we see it, a risk that the mere existence of such a fund—which in the first instance might not get adequate resources—could be used as a pretext for reduced contributions to other international assistance programmes, thereby leading to a net reduction of the resources which the developing countries so badly need to overcome the housing shortage and several other problems related to human settlements.

21. As regards draft resolution VIII, I wish to underline that we have no objection as to the holding of a United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements, a position which we hope we will have the opportunity to show clearly in the future, in dealing with the question in the Governing Council.

22. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translation from Russian*): The position of the Soviet delegation on all specific questions related to the recommendations of the Second Committee on agenda item 47 was set out in detail in the statement by our delegation on 24 October³ and also in a number of statements in explanation of vote in the Second Committee, in particular on 2 and 3 November.⁴ The specific reservations and comments made in the Committee are fully applicable to the decisions taken at today's plenary meeting on questions relating to the human environment and, in particular, the decisions concerning the Declaration and recommendations of the Stockholm Conference, including the Action Plan.⁵ In this connexion, the Soviet delegation would like once again to emphasize that in the conditions established by the decision imposed on the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly regarding participation in the Stockholm Conference, the Soviet Union, as is well known, was obliged to refrain from participating in it. The Soviet Union therefore bears no responsibility for the decisions and recommendations of the Stockholm Conference, which were adopted without its participation. We have already made certain specific comments and reservations regarding some of those decisions and we shall do so regarding others at a later stage

² See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5-16 June 1972* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.II.A.14), part three, para. 133.

³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Second Committee, 1470th meeting*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1479th to 1481st meetings.

⁵ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5-16 June 1972* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.II.A.14), chaps. I and II.

when the competent Soviet organizations have completed their study of the materials of the Stockholm Conference.

23. For these reasons and considerations of principle, the Soviet delegation abstained in the vote in the Second Committee, and will abstain in the vote here in the plenary meeting, on all decisions relating to the substance of the recommendations and decisions of the Stockholm Conference.

24. We also consider that the financial expenditures connected with the implementation of the General Assembly resolution on the institutional and financial arrangements in the environmental field [A/8972] are excessively high and, in this connexion, we reaffirm the serious reservations made by the Soviet delegation in the Fifth Committee.⁶

25. The Soviet Union has consistently and persistently advocated that, because of the universal character of the problem of the human environment, international co-operation on this problem within the framework of the United Nations should have a corresponding universal character and, accordingly, be on a basis of equal rights and be open to all interested countries, since international co-operation in this field can be successful only if the principle of universality is respected. We are gratified to note that the development of events confirms the correctness of the position of principle of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries on this question and that the German Democratic Republic is an agreed candidate of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe for membership in the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme and will, we hope, be elected a member of the Governing Council. I should like to take this opportunity to appeal to all representatives to vote in favour of the agreed candidates of the group of socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

26. The delegation of the Soviet Union would like to note with satisfaction the growing interest of the developing countries in the development of international co-operation in the protection of the environment, a well-known sign of which was the decision to locate the United Nations environment secretariat in Kenya. The Soviet delegation in the Second Committee expressed its full understanding of the concern of the developing countries on this question and accordingly supported the recommendation of the Second Committee that the United Nations environment secretariat should be located in a developing country, in the capital of Kenya.

27. Mr. MORENO (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): As members will have noted, both in the Second Committee and in the Assembly my delegation abstained in the vote on most of the draft resolutions relating to the results of the United Nations Conference on Human Environment. It is well known that for basic political reasons my country was unable to attend the Stockholm Conference, which accounts for my delegation's abstentions in the votes to which I have just referred. When one does not attend an international conference, it is of course difficult to acquire all the documentation and it becomes very difficult to

⁶ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Fifth Committee, 1551st meeting, paras. 53-55*.

consider the reports. Rather than making mistakes in the consideration of the documents of the Stockholm Conference, my delegation preferred to abstain in the voting. Cuba will take its final decisions after our competent authorities have reached conclusions on the subject.

28. May I take this opportunity to say that my delegation is very pleased that the German Democratic Republic will be in the executive organ which will continue the work of the human environment. This matter is apparently thus about to be resolved. This will probably overcome the difficulties that made it impossible for my delegation to attend the Stockholm Conference. It will certainly also promote the general principle of universality which we have advocated.

29. Mr. McCARTHY (United Kingdom): I am taking the floor for one reason only, which is to congratulate the ambassador of Kenya on the unanimous vote—a really unanimous vote; there were no abstentions—by which his capital has been selected as the site for the environment secretariat. It will be well known that there were differences of view in the Committee. They were based on differences of approach and not at any time on the quality of Nairobi. My Government, for one, looks forward with confidence and pleasure to working with the Government of Kenya to further the work of the environmental secretariat.

30. While I have the floor, I should like to follow my Soviet colleague in his references to candidacies in the forthcoming elections. I wish to make it perfectly clear that in the case of the two slates which are agreed, that is to say, the slates of Latin America and the slates of East European countries, my delegation will vote for all—I repeat, all—agreed candidates on the slates.

31. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): At the request of the African countries that are now meeting, we shall resume our consideration of agenda item 47 in order to discuss the election of the members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, and the note by the Secretary-General [A/8965] after we complete our discussion of agenda item 42.⁷

AGENDA ITEM 42

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE (A/8950)

32. Mr. AKBEL (Turkey), Rapporteur of the Special Political Committee: I have the honour to present, as Rapporteur of the Special Political Committee, its report on agenda item 42 [A/8950]. The Committee considered this item at its 849th to 855th meetings from 30 November to 7 December and had before it the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of Occupied Territories submitted in accordance with resolution 2851 (XXVI) [A/8828].

⁷ See below, paragraphs 124-182.

33. It should be recalled that the Special Committee was established by General Assembly resolution 2443 (XXIII) and had, as its mandate, the investigation of Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the territories occupied by Israel. In accordance with that resolution as well as subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly adopted at the past three sessions, the Special Committee has carried out its mandate and, as requested, has submitted a report every year on its work.

34. During the consideration of the item this year the Special Political Committee received a draft resolution sponsored by eight delegations which was introduced and orally revised, on behalf of the sponsors, by Pakistan. It was adopted by 60 votes to 10, with 44 abstentions. The draft resolution recommended by the Special Political Committee in paragraph 11 of its report, in addition to requesting the Special Committee to continue its work, spells out in detail certain areas of investigation to which the Special Committee should direct its special attention. The voting on that draft resolution shows the continuous and increased concern of the members of the Special Political Committee for safeguarding the human rights of the population of the territories occupied by Israel.

35. At the 855th meeting of the Special Political Committee, the representative of Yemen stated that several questions raised during the deliberations remained unanswered, and requested that the report should mention this point. As the published records of the Committee meetings are complementary and integral to the report in reflecting the work of the Committee, I trust that in this manner the request of the representative of Yemen has been complied with.

36. The Special Political Committee, in commending its report to the General Assembly, hopes that it will receive the favourable attention and consideration of the General Assembly.

Pursuant to rule 68 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss the report of the Special Political Committee.

37. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I shall call on representatives wishing to explain their votes before the vote.

38. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic): The draft resolution recommended by the Special Political Committee on Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population under Israeli occupation deserves the overwhelming support of the General Assembly. It is a draft resolution which, while avoiding polemics and strong words, reaffirms basic principles of humanitarian international law; describes unlawful acts of which the international community is well aware and which were never challenged, denied or contended by the occupying Power; it is a draft which aims, within those limitations created by the Israeli rejection of any supervisory or investigatory role by the United Nations, to keep the world Organization in close touch with the sinister developments affecting massively and permanently the human rights of the people under Israeli occupation.

39. We whole-heartedly support the draft as a whole, and in all its parts, because it upholds the following legal principles recognized by the entire international community.

40. First, the draft resolution upholds the principle that the occupation of territory in wartime is essentially a temporary *de facto* situation which deprives the occupied Power neither of its statehood nor its sovereignty and that, consequently, occupation as a result of war cannot imply any right whatsoever to dispose of that territory. As long as hostilities continue the occupying Power cannot annex the occupied territory, even if it occupies the whole of the territory concerned. The draft resolution under consideration reaffirms this precept of international law in its operative paragraph 3, which reads:

“Reaffirms that all measures taken by Israel in contravention of the Geneva Convention . . . to settle the occupied territories, including . . . Jerusalem, are null and void”.

41. Operative paragraph 4 affirms a corollary of the principle of permanent sovereignty and territorial integrity when it:

“Affirms the principle of the sovereignty of the population of the occupied territories over their national wealth and resources”.

42. The reaffirmation of those juridical principles in the draft resolution was made necessary in the light of the *de jure* annexation of Jerusalem and the *de facto* annexationist Israeli practices in Gaza, Sinai, the west bank and the Golan Heights of Syria. These practices are no more a secret. The settler colonialist leaders of Israel boast and compete with one another in devising master plans for the implementation of annexation and the creation of new and permanent political, demographic and economic facts in the occupied Arab lands.

43. The second legal principle upon which the draft resolution stands relates to the duties and obligations of States vis-à-vis the occupied territories. It is a fundamental principle of international law that no territorial acquisition from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal. A corollary of this principle is that Member States are under an obligation to refrain and desist from any acts or policies, and in particular from any dealings with the Government of the occupying Power, implying recognition of the legality of occupation or lending any support or assistance, whether diplomatic, military, economic or financial, to the occupation authorities. This principle is expressed in operative paragraph 5 of the draft which is before us and reads:

“Calls upon all States, international organizations and specialized agencies not to recognize or co-operate with, or assist in any manner in, any measures undertaken by the occupying Power to exploit the resources of the occupied territories or to effect any changes in the demographic composition or the geographic character or the institutional structure of these territories”.

That is a request addressed to those who support, directly or indirectly, the perpetuation of Israeli occupation.

44. The Government of the United States of America, which is the major patron and protector of Israel, the purveyor of armaments and economic assistance to the occupier, should forthwith desist from assisting and protecting the Israeli occupation. The United States and its close friends are not only helping Israel to continue its occupation and annexation but also to exploit the natural resources of the occupied lands, particularly the exploitation of oil and agricultural resources in the occupied territories. The Arabs everywhere consider the United States accountable for these acts. No amount of sophistry and casuistry in United States speeches can deflect our attention from the United States-Israeli collusion and connivance.

45. The international economic and development organizations of the United Nations system should *a fortiori* abide by operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution which is before us. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic will closely watch the implementation of that paragraph. The money of Member States entrusted to some international organizations shall not be used to the benefit of the Israeli occupation and its settlement policies in occupied territories.

46. The third legal principle which is contained in the draft resolution underscores the obligation of the parties to the Geneva Convention vis-à-vis the open repudiation by Israel of the fourth Geneva Convention.⁸ Israeli representatives have unabashedly declared on several occasions, the last of which was at the Special Political Committee's 849th meeting on 30 November 1972, that the Convention was not applicable to occupied Arab territories. It is a fundamental principle, stated in the *Commentary* on the fourth Geneva Convention,⁹ that an occupying Power continues to be bound to apply the Convention as a whole even when, in disregard of the rules of international law, it claims during a conflict to have annexed all or part of an occupied territory.

47. To understand the gravity of Israel's repudiation of its obligations under the Charter it should be remembered that the Convention

“... is rather a series of unilateral engagements solemnly contracted before the world as represented by the other Contracting Parties. Each State contracts obligations vis-à-vis itself and at the same time vis-à-vis the others. The motive of the Convention is so essential for the maintenance of civilization that the need is felt for its assertion, as much out of respect for it on the part of the signatory State itself as in the expectation of such respect from all parties”¹⁰

—indeed perhaps even more for the former reason than for the latter.

48. The seventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 6 contain in essence a reaffirmation of the

⁸ Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

⁹ *Commentary: III Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War* (Geneva, International Committee of the Red Cross, 1960).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

principle that States parties to the Convention shall not denounce their own obligations as regards ensuring Israel's respect for and fulfilment of its obligations under the Convention. Article 1 of the Geneva Convention reads:

"The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect and ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances."

49. Article 146 goes so far as to provide that:

"Each High Contracting Party shall be under the obligation to search for persons alleged to have committed, or to have ordered to be committed, such grave breaches, and shall bring such persons, regardless of their nationality, before its own courts. It may also, if it prefers, and in accordance with the provisions of its own legislation, hand such persons over for trial to another High Contracting Party concerned, provided such High Contracting Party has made out a *prima facie* case."

50. Regarding operative paragraph 2, which requests Israel to desist from committing the acts described in subparagraphs (a) to (e), which accurately reflect the Israeli practices in occupied territories, the Israeli representative was openly challenged in the Special Political Committee, before the vote on the draft resolution, by the representative of Honduras, who asked him to deny the charges levelled against his authorities, otherwise Honduras would have no alternative but to vote for the draft resolution.¹¹ The Israeli representative remained deaf and mute, so the representative of Honduras had to vote for the truth and for those principles which uphold human rights in occupied territories.

51. Despite the fact that the sixth preambular paragraph recognizes that a system of investigation and protection is required for the effective implementation of the fourth Geneva Convention, there seems to be some confusion in the minds of some delegations about the two levels of obligations provided for in the fourth Geneva Convention. Some delegations, perhaps in good faith, have equated the Israeli denunciation of its obligations under the Geneva Convention with the non-appointment by the "parties concerned" of a protecting Power. It should be made clear that Israel has made the creation of supervisory and protective instrumentalities an impossibility, since it has altogether repudiated all its obligations under the Geneva Convention, both on the level of legal undertakings towards occupied territories and their peoples and on the level of instrumentalities provided for carrying out supervision and protection.

52. Moreover, in respect of some occupied territories such as the Golan Heights of Syria, the "protected persons" who were entirely and massively displaced and evicted across the cease-fire lines into Syria cannot in practice be afforded protection under the Convention unless Israel permits them to return to their homes, as the fourth Geneva Convention defines "protected persons" as those in the hands of the occupying Power of which they are not nationals. Therefore, of all the parties concerned Israel, and only Israel, is

the one responsible for the non-application of the procedures relating to the creation of machinery for supervising the application of the fourth Geneva Convention.

53. Let me conclude my explanation of vote by quoting the following eloquent and far-sighted words from the 1970 report of the Special Political Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices in Occupied Territories:

"The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 may be considered as the expression of the international community's sense of revulsion at the treatment accorded to Jews who came under the Nazi régime during time of war and occupation and who were subjected to indignities, abuses and deprivations in gross denial of human rights.

"Since the adoption of that Convention the irony of history has made the June 1967 war between Israel and its neighbouring Arab countries, and the aftermath of that war, the first occasion on which the value of the Convention itself and the genuineness of individual nations' adherence to it could be put to the test."¹²

54. Israel's adherence to the fourth Geneva Convention was put to the test. Its genuineness turned out to be deceit. Israel remains the only contracting party which has openly and defiantly declared its non-adherence to the fourth Geneva Convention. The consequences of such a grave breach of the sanctity of obligations under international agreements have been disastrous for the occupied territories as well as for the whole international humanitarian legal system.

55. At a time when the territories of three States Members of the United Nations are under military occupation and subjected to the most rapacious usurpation and plunder by Zionist hordes pouring in from the four corners of the world, at a time when the colonization of Arab lands and the obliteration of the Arab national and cultural heritage is being shamelessly presented to the world as the fulfilment of claims embedded in nineteenth century colonial ventures, the vote on the draft resolution before us is a test of the genuine adherence of nations to the principles, purposes and provisions of humanitarian international law.

56. Mr. NUR ELMI (Somalia): My delegation would have preferred not to take part in the debate on this particular item on our agenda today, mainly for ethical reasons, because Somalia serves as a member of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, but Israeli representatives have on many occasions during the past three years attempted to discredit the Special Committee and questioned the impartiality and integrity of its members.

57. Furthermore, Israel challenges the authority of the General Assembly when it insists that the constitution of the Special Committee was illegal. It refuses, presumably on that basis, to receive or co-operate with the Special Committee because, it says, none of its members has diplomatic relations with Israel. The representatives in this

¹¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Special Political Committee*, 855th meeting, para. 24.

¹² *Ibid.*, *Twenty-fifth Session*, agenda item 101, document A/8089, paras. 41-42.

Assembly will see the light of truth and judge for themselves the objective analysis of the well-documented evidence and the reasonable conclusions of the report of the Special Committee [A/8828], so I shall not trouble myself to defend that report or interpret its contents, for it speaks for itself.

58. All I would like to do at this stage is to reaffirm my Government's position with regard to the problem of the Arab population of the occupied territories and, of course, that of the Palestinian refugees. In my statement of 6 December on the situation in the Middle East [2101st meeting], I stated that my Government's stand on the problem that we are discussing is one which does not allow room for any ambiguity whatsoever. I now repeat here before this Assembly that we strongly condemn Israel not merely because it is Israel, but because it is an arrogant Zionist State which denies to the displaced Arabs their sacred birthright and their aspirations to dignity and justice.

59. The Israeli delegation has, in the past two years, particularly questioned the impartiality of my country by reiterating unfounded allegations. I would therefore like to set the record straight and put things in their proper perspective once and for all.

60. Israel has repeatedly and monotonously stated, quoting the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Somali Democratic Republic, in a press conference in 1970, that Somalia "is in a state of war with Israel". Even conceding that such a statement was made, I find it strange that the learned Israeli representatives do not make a distinction between a press statement and a formal instrument of declaration of war. I know that they know the fundamental difference, but I also know of their adoration of distortion and deviation from truth.

61. However, the fact remains, and the meaning is, that the Somali Democratic Republic—and I admit it in this Assembly—is at moral war with injustice no matter who commits it; we are at moral war with the enemies of justice and freedom, whether these emanate from the grave violations of the most fundamental human rights perpetrated by Israel against the population of the occupied Arab territories and against the Palestinian refugees in contravention of the fourth Geneva Convention and in total disregard of the principles of international humanitarian law; whether they emanate from the dehumanizing policy of *apartheid*, based on the obnoxious doctrines of Hitlerism and fascism, and other repressive criminal acts of the Government of South Africa—which, incidentally, have a striking similarity to those of Israel—designed to keep in perpetual enslavement millions of our fellow human beings in their own homelands; whether they flow from the oppression of the people of Zimbabwe by the brigands of the white racist minority in Southern Rhodesia; whether they proceed from Portuguese colonial tyranny in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde, or whether they result from the tragic situation in Viet-Nam where one of the most powerful nations in the world is destroying a small nation.

62. This is the explanation and the meaning of our state of moral war with Israel and with anyone else who commits injustice. We stand firmly by it and we speak with the

strength of the moral content of our position, and we therefore condemn all practices of injustice which subject millions of helpless peoples to political oppression, economic exploitation, social degradation, humiliation, hardship and suffering.

63. Mr. NUÑEZ (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In all matters pertaining to the Middle East the delegation of Costa Rica is moved by one basic purpose, the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign nation within secure frontiers recognized by all. My delegation believes that the pursuit of this purpose is justified by the act of law of the United Nations which gave legal existence to the State of Israel. Our view was confirmed in Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

64. The delegation of Costa Rica will vote against the draft resolution submitted for our approval by the Special Political Committee. Our attitude derives from two considerations. First, our delegation cannot accept the functioning of an investigating Special Committee which is composed exclusively of three Powers that have not concealed their animosity to the State of Israel, as we have just heard. Secondly, our delegation cannot accept the restrictive terms of reference given to the Special Committee, since they disregard the human rights of other human beings in the same area who are also suffering the consequences of the same conflict.

65. When the composition of the Special Committee has been changed in a spirit of fairness and a non-discriminatory mandate is given to the Committee our delegation will have no difficulty in making a judgement on the conclusions derived from its reports.

66. Our delegation has noted with regret the lack of objectivity displayed by many delegations to the point where all efforts of the Israeli delegation to counter these charges are summarily dismissed as lacking in credibility.

67. In casting a negative vote my delegation does not, however, disregard the lot of the Palestinian populations that are suffering the political consequences of a conflict that led to the occupation and administration of certain territories in the area by the State of Israel.

68. Our delegation does not minimize the principle, mentioned in this context, of the non-acquisition of territories by force. It is all too easy to proclaim principles in the abstract; the principles have to be judged in the light of specific situations and concrete facts. These facts and situations correspond to certain political realities and, in the case which is now before us, we must bear in mind, as an important element of judgement, the fact that no mutually recognized frontiers have been established between Israel and its neighbours. What we see is the temporary occupation of territory by a Power that was provoked into waging a war in order to defend its very existence.

69. Many nations represented here have, as a result of victory in a war, occupied territory beyond their frontiers and have had to minister to the needs of the inhabitants therein, in the expectation of a peace treaty. This does not mean that there was a derogation from the principle of the

non-acquisition of territory by force. It was simply an acceptance of the irreducible fact that a nation could and had to assume responsibility for ministering to the needs of a population as a consequence of war. How is it possible for us not to recognize that Israel has the same power and responsibility to administer and to minister to the needs of a population?

70. Thousands of persons who visit Israel without encountering any restrictions imposed by the authorities—newspapermen, churchmen, statesmen, noted intellectuals, young people, labour leaders—have testified to the peaceful and orderly life there and to the prosperity of the Arab peoples, whose economic, political and cultural needs are met by the authorities of the administering Power, with respect for their interests and their preferences. Testimony has been given by thousands of visitors that the administering authorities are efficiently and with respect discharging the obligations that have devolved upon them as a consequence of a conflict they did not seek. The uncomfortable situation confronting the administration in the occupied territories and the problem of the self-determination of the population there will be adequately resolved on the establishment of a political solution resulting from effective negotiations leading to peace.

71. The delegation of Israel has made it clear on various occasions that it is prepared to withdraw within the lines to be determined by a peace treaty. The delegation of Costa Rica believes in Israel's sincerity when its leaders state that what they seek is peace and security—nothing more but nothing less.

72. Mr. DORON (Israel): The draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly by the Special Political Committee, as set out in document A/8950, is devoid of any connexion with reality and goes even beyond the findings of the Special Committee, the latest report of which—document A/8828—was the subject matter of the discussion in the Special Political Committee.

73. From the very beginning of its activities, the Special Committee has stretched and exceeded its mandate, as can easily be seen from its reports, but the proposed draft resolution introduces further extraneous matters outside the province of that Committee and unconnected with its report.

74. I have no intention of embarking at this stage on a detailed analysis of the draft resolution, which is unacceptable in its entirety. But, merely by way of illustration of what I have just said, I would single out particularly operative paragraphs 4 and 5 as examples of political matters outside the scope of the Special Committee's mandate, introduced with the intention of having it make some more pronouncements useful only for the purposes of anti-Israeli propaganda.

75. Subparagraphs (e) and (f) of paragraph 8 of the draft resolution are examples of particularly odious and mischievous allegations, using the obnoxious technique of slander by innuendo. No less objectionable and unsubstantiated is operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which appears to have been drawn from the Special Committee's report.

76. It should be remembered that the Special Committee was created by a one-sided resolution which prejudged the issue and also ignored the situation of the oppressed Jewish communities in Arab countries, in disregard of the provisions of Security Council resolution 237 (1967). That Committee was subsequently constituted in a highly irregular manner and is of most dubious legality, as has been pointed out by a number of delegations on various occasions. It is composed of three countries that have no diplomatic relations with Israel and this Assembly was told a few minutes ago by the representative of one of them that his Foreign Minister had declared at a press conference in 1970 that his country considered itself to be in a state of war with Israel. The investigation set off to the fanfares of publicity and under the lights of television cameras. Then, having obviously exhausted the original, prefabricated material that was supplied to it, the Special Committee has had resort to constant repetitions and quotations from its own reports, so as to create the impression that the pronouncements and so-called findings and conclusions in its present report are supported by some kind of acceptable evidence or other reliable material—which, of course, they are not. Such then, is the supposed basis for the draft resolution before us. Fanciful speculations and conclusions are based on selective quotations from Israeli newspapers, with which the report abounds.

77. The draft resolution reflects the unfounded accusations against Israel made in the report. Yet it is well known, for example, that the construction of roads in the refugee camps in the Gaza Strip was indeed imperative to enable the security forces to save and protect the Arab inhabitants from the murder gangs who were seeking to terrorize them and prevent them from reverting to normal life and engaging in gainful employment instead of continuing to eke out a doleful existence as theretofore. After the construction of those roads, the situation improved out of recognition; normal life has been restored to the Gaza Strip, and this fact has been widely acknowledged.

78. Some other—very few—houses were demolished for security reasons, relating to known terrorists, their bases or arms caches. Action taken in this behalf is based on the laws obtaining in the areas since the Jordanian and Egyptian occupation and even before it. There have been absolutely no cases of confiscation of property. Some land was acquired upon payment of full compensation under the relevant local laws for public purposes, including the construction of housing for the Arab population. Throughout the areas, in every Arab town and village, extensive building activity has developed such as has never been seen there before.

79. The report even belittles and finds fault with the vast economic and social improvements which have taken place in the areas, an undeniable fact recognized even in the Arab press. On looking at the report and the draft resolution, for all one knows one could be reading about the moon, except that of late one does obtain more accurate information in respect of that planet.

80. Concerning the allegations of expulsions or deportations, a very small number of individuals, agitators and saboteurs, instead of being locked up for long terms, have been asked to join those who, from across the safety of the

cease-fire lines, had directed and instructed them to engage in their criminal activities in the areas. Last year such cases were fewer than 10. Their total over five years was less than 100, many of whom have since been allowed to come back.

81. The simple and compelling answer to the ridiculous allegations of expulsions, depopulation of the areas, elimination of their Arab character, and so on, surely lies in the uncontrovertible fact that the Arab population of the areas has been steadily on the increase, by now exceeds 1 million, and continues to grow.

82. So much for all these horror stories. They are made up for one purpose only, that of vilifying and defaming my country.

83. As for the return of displaced persons, my delegation has more than once pointed out that, although this question has to be seen in the light of the prevailing security situation, tens of thousands of these people have in fact been permitted to return. This question, as all the others pertaining to the general problem of the Middle East, will find its just solution with the eventual advent of peace, which we fervently hope for.

84. Unfortunately, however, the present draft resolution is not at all conducive to peace and is characteristic of the malicious spirit which inspires and pervades all such resolutions submitted on matters concerning my country. The object of its sponsors is merely to provide the Committee with some grist to its empty mill, but in fact they bring up nothing but chaff.

85. My delegation utterly and completely rejects this draft resolution and will vote against it.

86. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): I had no intention whatsoever of taking the floor in the General Assembly on this item, which concerns a report by the Special Committee, of which I happen to be the Chairman. I did not wish to do so because I did not want to provoke the representative of Israel into making another diatribe against myself and my colleagues on the Special Committee. But there were certain observations made which I cannot permit to go unchallenged and I regret to have to state that the observations come from a representative in clerical garb.

87. The representative of Costa Rica stated that the three members who constituted that Committee have shown complete animosity towards Israel. To this statement, I must take the strongest exception. My Government has always recognized the right of the State of Israel to exist. We have recognized its right to exist in peace and security, which is the right of every country in this world. Not only did we recognize that right, but we recognize Israel itself, and until 1970 we permitted it to maintain a mission in our country. It was only in 1970 that we were forced to suspend diplomatic relations with Israel, and that only because we thought that a moral gesture of that nature was necessary to persuade that country to come to a settlement of the Middle Eastern problem.

88. I am not stating here that it is only Israel's responsibility to co-operate in bringing about that settlement. But the Costa Rican representative might have thought of a

better excuse for refusing to face the facts than merely impugning the integrity of the members of the Special Committee. He might have chosen dispassionately to examine the evidence of the Special Committee, evidence which came from the mouths of Israeli leaders themselves and not from newspaper moonshine.

89. It seems that the dispossessed Palestinian people can well do without the crocodile tears and solicitude of the representative of Costa Rica, who does not seem even to have read our report.

90. Objection has once again been raised to the constitution and establishment of the Special Committee, and to the fact that it was required to confine itself to violations of the human rights of the population of occupied territories. I should like the representative of Israel to let me know whether the Geneva Convention under which this Committee was established empowers the Special Committee to examine violations of human rights in the Arab countries in general. The only Arab countries whose territories are occupied are those countries whose territories are occupied by Israel. If the United Nations had thought fit to appoint a committee to examine violations of human rights in areas outside occupied territories, it might have very well done so. It is still free to do so:

91. Mr. AL-SAYEGH (Kuwait): My delegation supported in the Special Political Committee and will support now the draft resolution recommended by that Committee to the Assembly for adoption. In supporting this draft resolution we are animated by two equally potent and effective concerns. The first is our concern for the population of the occupied territories and our concern for their human rights, individual and national, and we have ample evidence that those rights are being jeopardized as a result of the policies and practices of the occupying Power. As a Member of the United Nations, and particularly as an Arab Member of the United Nations concerned for the human rights of fellow Arabs, as well as fellow human beings, we support this recommendation.

92. But, secondly, we support this recommendation out of concern for the integrity of the international system itself. For what is at stake here is the fate of humanitarian law in circumstances of military occupation, the fate of conventions and treaties and multilateral undertakings, as well as universal principles affecting the practices, policies and obligations of occupying Powers in occupied territories with respect to the human rights of the population and with respect to the territories themselves. Our concern for the integrity of this system of humanitarian law is no less than our concern for the human rights of the Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories.

93. Operative paragraph 1 of the draft before us commends the Special Committee for its efforts to carry out the tasks assigned to it. We proclaim that in supporting that paragraph we are doing more than extend a common courtesy to an agent that has performed a task assigned to it by its principal. It is a special commendation that is being voted for by my delegation to a committee that has performed its tasks admirably in most difficult circumstances, and we should like it to be clear that our vote is more than a mere act of common courtesy.

94. The Special Committee, in the course of the debates of the past few years, including the debate in the Special Political Committee this year, has been the subject of criticism by a very small number of States on two grounds: first, on the organizational ground of its composition and, second, on the ground of its terms of reference. We should like to explain our position on these two points for the record.

95. As far as the composition of that Committee is concerned, we maintain and submit that the attitude of Israel to the Special Committee has nothing whatsoever to do with its composition; for in point of fact Israel has refused to submit to international scrutiny, not only by the Special Committee but by a number of other agencies of the United Nations which have been created for that purpose; and in many instances it has refused to submit to international scrutiny even before knowing the identity of the individuals or States that were to make up those agencies.

96. Invoking the composition of the Committee to excuse Israel's refusal to co-operate with it is only searching far and wide for a pretext to excuse a consistent attitude on the part of Israel: that of refusing to submit its policies and practices in the occupied territories to the scrutiny of the United Nations and the international community. And may I say that, despite Security Council resolution 259 (1968), which requested the Secretary-General to send a Special Representative to investigate the conditions of the population of the occupied territories, Israel refused admission to the Special Representative before even knowing who he was going to be. It cannot be said that it rejected him because it knew in advance that he would be partial or biased, or hostile to Israel.

97. The abuse to which the Special Committee has been subjected is a tribute to an organ of the United Nations, inasmuch as that abuse comes from a State that has habitually abused every international agent and every international organ that has passed judgement on its activities: Secretaries-General of the United Nations, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Special Working Group set up by the Commission on Human Rights—one and all have learned by personal, direct and immediate experience that, whenever the law is brought to bear and Israel is judged by the law, they are abused in exactly the same way as this Special Committee is abused. I say to the Chairman of that Committee, Ambassador Amerasinghe, and its other members: you are in good company when you are the recipients of Israeli abuse.

98. As far as the terms of reference of the Special Committee are concerned—to which some reference has been made—my delegation is completely stupefied and bewildered by the loose talk about one-sidedness and two-sidedness. As my delegation has asked again and again, year after year, are there two types of occupied territories—Arab territories occupied by Israel and Israeli territories occupied by the Arab States? And then the United Nations creates a committee on a selective basis to investigate the practices of Israel in the Arab territories occupied by it and to ignore the practices of the Arab States in the Israeli terri-

tory occupied by them? Are there Israeli territories occupied by the Arab States? If there is none, then the application of the principles of international law governing military occupation must by nature be one-sided. Otherwise, what in the name of common sense does two-sidedness mean, when there is only one side? And how can a committee be expected to be two-sided in performing its task when there is only one side from which to perform its task? What in the name of common sense is the meaning of that criticism and that charge?

99. Regarding operative paragraph 2 of the draft before us, the evidence accumulated and the conclusions reached by the Special Committee have been corroborated by a number of other agencies of the United Nations, including the Special Working Group of Experts established under resolution 6 (XXV) of the Commission on Human Rights; including special representatives of the Secretary-General sent to the area in the first year of the occupation; including the International Committee of the Red Cross; including private organizations and other international agencies such as the mission of the National Council of Churches of Christ of the United States, including Amnesty International. The evidence and the conclusions submitted to the United Nations by the Special Committee have all been corroborated by all these distinguished persons and bodies. It is evidence that is drawn largely from the official pronouncements of Israeli leaders, from the Prime Minister to the Minister of War, who is directly in charge of the occupied territories, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and so on; and often from statements made in Parliament, official statements regarding acts which are admitted in those statements. Even the representative of Israel has never denied these acts. He has tried to explain them; he has never denied them.

100. And yet they cannot be explained away, because they are violations of the Geneva Convention, which does not excuse these acts under any circumstances or for any reason whatsoever.

101. I shall not speak about all the other paragraphs of the draft before us. I shall focus on only two more.

102. Operative paragraph 5 is in our opinion of great importance, because it is the corollary of operative paragraph 3—namely, reaffirmation that the illegal acts of Israel in the occupied territories are null and void. As my delegation pointed out in the Special Political Committee, that has been proclaimed by organs of the United Nations on more than half a dozen occasions. The Security Council, the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights have proclaimed illegal acts by Israel in the occupied territories to be null and void. We are now only repeating that proclamation. And if those acts are null and void, then it follows that operative paragraph 5 is imperative. There is a moral obligation on all Members of the United Nations not to acquiesce in, not to recognize, not to encourage, not to aid and support illegal acts which the United Nations deems null and void. But Members also have a legal obligation, in so far as they are parties to the Geneva Convention, to abstain from acquiescing in or recognizing those acts and from supporting their perpetrator. And therefore we take it that it is a corollary of the nullification of the illegal acts of Israel, and any ignoring of that

principle is a moral dereliction by the ignoring State as well as a legal dereliction and a violation of the ignoring State's legal obligations under the Geneva Convention.

103. Finally, I come to operative paragraph 8, and I wish before the vote to state my delegation's understanding of that paragraph. We understand it to involve the high office of the Secretary-General in the pursuit of ways and means of enabling the Special Committee to perform its task. The modality of that involvement is not spelled out, in the interests of flexibility and of not limiting the resourcefulness of either the Special Committee or the Secretary-General in the search for ways and means, avenues of approach and methods and modalities to enable the Committee to perform its tasks.

104. It is my delegation's earnest wish that as early as possible, at the initiative of either the Special Committee or the Secretary-General, full mutual consultations between the Special Committee and the Secretary-General should take place in order to see how, by what method and by what means the Secretary-General can assist the Special Committee so as to enable it to perform its task.

105. In conclusion, I would say that it is my delegation's firm belief that as we cast our votes on this draft we not only express our concern or lack of concern for the fate of the population of the occupied Arab territories; we also express our concern or lack of concern for the fate of the very international legal humanitarian system governing this entire matter.

106. Mr. Ahmed OSMAN (Egypt) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us, and we commend it to the General Assembly for adoption.

107. In the first place, the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied territories accords with the philosophy and spirit of the Charter.

108. The work of the Special Committee accords with the spirit of the Charter because the spirit that prevailed after the Second World War demanded that the activities, atrocities, crimes and illegalities that existed under Nazi occupation during the Second World War in Europe should not occur again.

109. It is true that the victims of the atrocities and lawlessness of today are the African and Asian peoples, but, in view of the principle of the equality of all men enshrined in the Charter, the principles which condemned the Nazis at the Nürnberg trials should condemn today's neo-Nazis in the Middle East.

110. It is strange, surprising and cynical that, 25 years after the Second World War, organs of the State of Israel and of the Zionist movement throughout the entire world are pursuing persons who were suspected of committing crimes under the Nazi régime. In these circumstances, it is surprising to hear what has just been said by the representative of Israel from this rostrum as the representative of a State which as a Member of the United Nations should respect its Charter and its principles. The representative of

Israel vehemently opposed actions adopted by this Assembly to protect and try to relieve the sufferings of those in territories now occupied by Israel.

111. My delegation would have thought the representative of Israel would come to this Assembly and proclaim that Israel had finally decided to respect the Charter and the resolutions of this Assembly, as also the general principles of international law, the territorial integrity of Member States and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. But the representative of Israel came to this rostrum only to reaffirm the racist, colonialist and expansionist policies of his country—policies condemned in the draft now before the Assembly, which calls upon Israel to abandon them.

112. I am not engaging in rhetoric when I speak of the colonialist and racist policies of Israel, which are condemned by the draft resolution, whose purpose it is to prevent them. What is really at stake is that Israel recognizes for all Jews the right to come and settle in the occupied territories, take over the houses and work the fields of the Palestinian workers there; at the same time the policies of Israel prevent the real and genuine inhabitants of the territories from exercising their rights.

113. Secondly, I have said that this draft resolution condemns the colonial policies of Israel. Israel does not seem to be ashamed, 25 years after the Second World War, to come and speak the same language and use the same jargon and terminology as outmoded colonialism. For it says it is trying to improve the fate of the populations of the occupied territories—as though we have not already heard the same kind of language in the debate on colonialism. We have already heard enough about the "civilizing mission" of those who wish to exploit and dominate their brothers.

114. Finally, this draft resolution, which I commend to the General Assembly for adoption, condemns the annexationist policies of Israel. Indeed, all members have read the statements by various Israeli Ministers on the 42, 44 or 45 Israeli settlements which are every day being set up in the occupied territories to be populated by alien settlers so as to ensure that they will not one day be returned to their genuine inhabitants.

115. That is why my delegation firmly supports the draft resolution and commends it to the General Assembly for adoption.

116. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended in paragraph 11 of the report of the Special Political Committee [A/8950]. The report of the Fifth Committee on the financial and administrative implications appears in document A/8973. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Bahrain, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chad, China, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Republic, Malaysia, Mali, Mauri-

tania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: Barbados, Bolivia, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Israel, Liberia, Nicaragua, United States of America, Uruguay.

Abstaining: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Central African Republic, Colombia, Dahomey, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Laos, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Rwanda, Singapore, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Zaire.

*The draft resolution was adopted by 63 votes to 10, with 49 abstentions (resolution 3005 (XXVII)).*¹³

117. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Somalia in exercise of his right of reply.

118. Mr. NUR ELMI (Somalia): When I spoke earlier I said at one point that I knew that the Israelis knew the fundamental difference between a press statement and a formal instrument of a declaration of war. But I added that I also knew of their adoration of distortion and deviation from the truth. I come from a nomadic country where there is an old adage that says that the best answer to a liar is silence. I think I must depart from that and try once again to set the record straight.

119. While criticizing the members of the Special Committee the representative of Israel said that one of its members—and the inference was quite clear, it was the representative of Somalia he was referring to—had admitted before this Assembly that his Foreign Minister had stated that Somalia was in a state of war. It so happens that what the Assembly heard was a quotation of what the Israelis themselves say. According to this document, which has the Star of David on it, the representative of Israel, Ambassador Doron, speaking in the Special Political Committee on 30 December 1972—only two weeks ago—said:

“As everybody here knows, none of these countries has diplomatic relations with Israel. The Foreign Minister of Somalia even declared in 1970 that his country considered itself in a state of war with Israel. Yugoslavia has broken off relations with Israel in 1967 and has been in the forefront of anti-Israel initiatives in the United Nations, such as sponsoring various resolutions against my country. Sri Lanka has also broken off relations with Israel.”¹⁴

¹³ The delegations of Sierra Leone and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic subsequently informed the Secretariat that they wished to have their votes recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution.

¹⁴ This statement was made at the 849th meeting of the Special Political Committee, the official records of which are published in summary form.

I was quoting from that statement when I spoke, and I am glad that my remark about the adoration of these people for distortion and deviation from the truth has turned out to be correct. Israel has refused to co-operate with this Committee; it has refused to accept it. But it is strange that it comes before this Assembly or elsewhere in the United Nations to speak of how the Arabs are better off now under Israeli domination than when they were free people. Ambassador Tekoah of Israel stated before the Security Council on 26 June 1972 that he was extending an invitation to all representatives around the Security Council table:

“... to come and to see for themselves what the situation is in those parts of Palestine where the Arab inhabitants of Palestine are free to express their view on the central issue which has troubled the Middle East for so long and which has been before the United Nations for so many years—the question of coexistence, of living side by side, of working side by side, of Jew and Arab.”¹⁵

120. I seized the opportunity then in the Security Council; I challenged Ambassador Tekoah and stated among other things that:

“... two States members of the Security Council”—(Somalia and Yugoslavia)—“are also members of the United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories. But the Government of Israel has in the past, as we all know, refused to admit the members of that Special Committee to these regions. Now, I should like the members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General to take special note of this invitation...”

I now renew that challenge to the Israeli representative.

121. The reason I requested to speak in exercise of my right of reply was simply to try once again to set the record straight: that I was quoting an Israeli. The representative of Israel said that I had admitted before the Assembly that my Foreign Minister had stated that we were in a state of war, but he should have listened carefully to what I said before that sentence. I said that Israel particularly questions the impartiality of my country by reiterating unfounded allegations. That is what compelled me to exercise my right of reply in order to set the record straight.

122. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): That concludes our consideration of agenda item 42 and of all the items referred to the Special Political Committee. I congratulate the officers and members of the Special Political Committee on their work.

123. Since the African group has not yet concluded its consultations, the meeting will now be suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 5.20 p.m. and resumed at 6 p.m.

¹⁵ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-seventh Year, 1650th meeting.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

AGENDA ITEM 47

**United Nations Conference on the Human Environment:
report of the Secretary-General (concluded)**

124. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), which we have just adopted at this meeting [*see para. 6 above*], provides that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, composed of 58 members, shall be elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms, on the following basis: 16 seats for African States; 13 seats for Asian States; 10 seats for Latin American States; 13 seats for Western European and other States; and six seats for Eastern European States.

125. Active consultations have taken place, and I understand that the Assembly is now ready for the election. I should like to outline the procedure that I intend to follow.

126. We shall proceed in two stages. We shall first elect the 58 members of the Governing Council. After that I shall consult the Assembly on the procedure to be followed in choosing from among the members elected in each category those which will serve for three years, those for two years and those for one year, respectively. Thereafter, we shall apply the procedure decided upon by the Assembly. If there is no objection, we shall follow the procedure that I have just explained.

It was so decided.

127. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now proceed to elect the 58 members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.

128. Pursuant to rule 94 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot, and there shall be no nominations.

129. I call on the representative of Austria on a point of order.

130. Mr. WOLTE (Austria): On a very brief point of order, I should like to inform representatives that, with a view to facilitating the elections, New Zealand has withdrawn its candidature for a seat on the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. Therefore there are now only 15 countries members of the Western Europe and other States group which have announced their candidature for the 13 seats allocated to that group, and not 16, as formerly.

131. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Members of the Assembly will take account of that comment and make the necessary corrections on the ballots.

132. I would ask representatives to be good enough to write the names of the countries for which they wish to vote in each category.

133. In accordance with existing practice, the required number of candidates in each category who receive the

largest number of votes and not less than a majority of the votes cast will be declared elected. In the event of a tie vote for the last places, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes. There is always a possibility, in cases where there are more candidates than seats to be filled, that more candidates than can be elected may get the required majority. If such a situation occurs may I consider that it would be the understanding—based on a precedent at the twenty-first session in the election of members of the Industrial Development Board—that of the candidates obtaining the required majority those with the smallest number of votes will be considered as having withdrawn.

It was so decided.

At the request of the President, the following representatives acted as tellers: group A, Mr. Gekhman (Yemen); group B, Mrs. de Barish (Costa Rica); group C, Mr. Schrijvers (Belgium); group D, Mr. Garvalov (Bulgaria); group E, Mr. Mogami (Botswana).

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

134. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Since the counting of the ballots will take about three hours, I propose that the meeting should be suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 6.35 p.m. and resumed at 9.55 p.m.

135. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I shall now inform the members of the General Assembly of the results of the election of the members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.

GROUP A

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	132
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	132
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	132
<i>Required majority:</i>	67

Number of votes obtained:

Kenya	129
Cameroon	121
United Republic of Tanzania	119
Somalia	119
Madagascar	118
Burundi	110
Nigeria	105
Tunisia	104
Senegal	103
Gabon	102
Central African Republic	101
Ghana	93
Malawi	91
Morocco	90
Sierra Leone	90
Mauritania	86
Sudan	86
Ivory Coast	77
Libyan Arab Republic	76

Niger	61
Egypt	24
Algeria	6
Uganda	2
Chad	1
Congo	1
Guinea	1
Liberia	1
Mali	1
Mauritius	1
Swaziland	1

GROUP B

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	132
<i>Number of invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	132
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	132
<i>Required majority:</i>	67

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Lebanon	124
Pakistan	119
China	117
Japan	115
Kuwait	115
Indonesia	114
Sri Lanka	114
Iran	113
India	108
Jordan	105
Iraq	103
Philippines	99
Syrian Arab Republic	90
Thailand	87
Yemen	81
Afghanistan	3
Mongolia	2
Nepal	2
Bhutan	1
Burma	1
Democratic Yemen	1
Fiji	1
Maldives	1
Singapore	1

GROUP C

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	132
<i>Number of invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	132
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	132
<i>Required majority:</i>	67

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Peru	130
Chile	129
Mexico	128
Jamaica	126
Argentina	125
Venezuela	123
Brazil	122
Panama	122

Guatemala	113
Nicaragua	110
Cuba	6
Guyana	3
Barbados	1
Costa Rica	1
Trinidad and Tobago	1

Group D

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	132
<i>Number of invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	132
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	132
<i>Required majority:</i>	67

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Sweden	125
Federal Republic of Germany	120
Austria	117
France	117
Italy	113
Australia	112
Canada	112
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	111
United States of America	109
Netherlands	107
Turkey	106
Iceland	102
Spain	97
Ireland	89
Malta	55
New Zealand	4
Finland	3
Greece	3
Luxembourg	2
Switzerland	2
Norway	1

Group E

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	132
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	132
<i>Abstentions:</i>	1
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	131
<i>Required majority:</i>	66

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Yugoslavia	127
Poland	126
Czechoslovakia	125
Romania	125
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	124
German Democratic Republic	120
Bulgaria	2
Hungary	2
Albania	1

Having obtained the required majority, the following States were elected members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada,

Central African Republic, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, (Federal Republic of), Ghana, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

136. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In group A the following two states received the same number of votes: Mauritania and Sudan. As decided earlier at our meeting the Assembly will take a vote limited to these two countries.

At the request of the President Mr. Gekhman (Yemen) acted as teller.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	100
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	0
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	100
<i>Abstentions:</i>	4
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	96
<i>Required majority:</i>	49

<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Sudan	52
Mauritania	44

Having obtained the required majority, Sudan was elected a member of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.

137. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): We now arrive at the second phase of our procedure. Before we decide on the procedure for choosing which among the elected members will serve for three years, two years and one year, I should like to inquire if the Assembly agrees that 20 members would serve for three years, 19 for two years and 19 for one year, making a total of 58 members. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to this allocation.

It was so decided.

138. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): Regarding the procedure for choosing the 20 members to serve for three years, the 19 members to serve for two years and the 19 members to serve for one year, I should like to inform members that the procedure of drawing by lot has been used in respect of other bodies of the United Nations when a similar choice has had to be made. I therefore propose that the Assembly draw lots to select the members to serve terms of three years, two years and one year respectively.

139. The allocation of the different terms of office has been a very difficult mathematical problem, and, the various groups of States having been consulted, it has been proposed

that, among the 16 African States elected in group A, six States should be elected to serve for three years, five for two years and five for one year. From the 13 Asian States elected in group B, four would serve for three years, four for two years and five for one year. From the 10 Latin American States elected in group C, four would serve for three years, 3 for two years and three for one year. From the 13 Western European and other States elected in group D, four would serve for three years, five for two years and four for one year. From the six Eastern European States elected in group E, two would serve for three years, two for two years and two for one year. May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that distribution?

140. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): I think we are dividing up our world too much. The spirit of the Charter is too universal for us to take the regions one by one. I think it would be just for one third to be elected for three years, one third for two years and one third for one year. Therefore, I propose that we do not divide things up according to regions. We are all States members of the Environment Programme, and we all have equal rights. I think that we must show, at least on this question, our international solidarity.

141. Mr. MANI (India): The view expressed by the representative of Tunisia is good as far as it goes. But if we depend upon the principle of universality, what will happen if we draw lots? Probably all the industrialized countries will be elected for three years, the less industrialized countries will be elected for two years and the developing countries will be elected for one year. This anomaly will be there. Therefore, we must take care of that and we must have the election on a group basis only, which is what was suggested by the President. I am sure that the majority of the members present here will accept that proposal.

142. Secondly, I have some comments to make with respect to the division made for the Asian group. For the African group, the President has taken six States for three years, five States for two years and five States for one year. For the Latin American group, the President has taken four States for three years, three States for two years and three States for one year. For the Western European and other group, the President has taken four States for three years, five States for two years and four States for one year. For the Eastern European group, because it was an even number, the President divided the number by three—two States for three years, two States for two years and two States for one year. But in the case of the Asian group, the President has taken four States for three years, four for two years, and five for one year. I think it is not quite fair to put five States for one year. Five States should be either in the middle or should serve for three years. Therefore, I ask you, Mr. President, to reconsider your proposal. I am sure that the Asian group will go along with me.

143. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): I must first of all state that for once I cannot agree with the representative of Tunisia. He suggested that in the drawing of lots we should disregard geographical groupings. I certainly cannot agree with that. The whole idea of geographical representation must be maintained with regard to the tenure of office of the various members of the Governing Council.

144. I do not think that the previous speaker, the representative of India, was quite correct when he interpreted your suggestion, Mr. President. I believe—and you are free to correct me if I am wrong—that you suggested that as regards the tenure of office there should be proportionate representation with respect to each group and, on that principle, Africa, having 16 members, would have six members serve for three years, five for two years and five for one year; that the Asian group and the Western European and other group, each of which having 13 members, would have five members each serving for three years, four members each serving for two years and four members each for one year. If that was your proposal, Mr. President, I certainly agree with it. I believe that the representative of India was mistaken when he interpreted your suggestion in a different way.

145. As regards the Latin American group, I believe you suggested that, as it has 10 members, four members should serve for three years, three members for two years and three members for one year. As regards the Eastern European group, as it has satisfied the principle of mathematical accuracy, there will be two members serving for three years, two members for two years and two members for one year.

146. You have suggested, Mr. President, that we should draw lots for this purpose. It seems to me that the votes cast already indicate clearly the opinion of the general membership. I myself would have preferred to see those that received the largest number of votes given preference in regard to the tenure of office. In other words, with respect to the African group, those six members that received the largest number of votes would serve for three years, the five members that came next in the number of votes would serve for two years, and the remaining five members that received the lesser number of votes would serve for one year. I had wished to make this suggestion before the count was taken, but owing to procedural difficulties I did not succeed in doing that.

147. So far as we are concerned, I can say, without any danger of being suspected of taking care of our own interests, that if our suggestion were accepted, we would fall in the middle group. We would hold office for two years.

148. I do not know whether the Assembly would wish to consider this suggestion, but, in any case, Mr. President, I would in all circumstances defer to your wishes.

149. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): I apologize for having asked to be allowed to speak again, but I wanted to offer a clarification. I did not make a formal proposal; I simply wanted to remind everyone of our principle of universality and to try to find a formula other than that of regional or subregional division which has been proposed to us. So as not to make the matter more complicated, Mr. President, I support your suggestion.

150. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Under-Secretary-General to explain the procedure.

151. Mr. MORSE (Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs): As the President has

indicated, it was an exceedingly difficult mathematical problem to effect the distribution of States for the various terms of various lengths. Therefore, anticipating that the General Assembly might decide that 20 members should be elected for a period of three years, 19 for a period of two years and 19 for a period of one year, I met this afternoon with the chairmen of those groups representing the members which were elected in groups A, B, C and D. Due to the fact that those members elected in group E were six, which was easily divisible by three as the President has noted, it was not necessary to have the chairman of that group in the consultations.

152. It became clear that, with the division of the seats as established by the resolution which was adopted by the General Assembly, it was desirable to divide the number of seats so assigned by three in each instance and determine how many seats would be left over beyond that number, divisible by three, and in each case it was one. Therefore, after agreement with the chairmen of the groups representing members who were elected in groups A, B, C and D, lots were drawn and the allocation that here appears was agreed upon by the chairmen of the groups which were the subject of elections in groups A, B, C and D. It was through that procedure that this formula was agreed upon.

153. Mr. MANI (India): I apologize to you, Mr. President, for requesting permission to speak again. In view of the explanation that has been given, I wish to speak only to keep the record straight. What I heard from you was that you would divide, for the purposes of the three-year period, the Asian group as follows: four countries for three years, four countries for two years and five countries for one year. That is what you said; it is correct and I accept your ruling, and bow to it.

154. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I propose to the Assembly that the suggested procedure be adopted, because, as Mr. Morse has indicated, the distribution of one seat in every group has already been done by the drawing of lots. In other words, we now have a precedent for the distribution of places for one, two and three years.

155. I think I understand the proposal of Sri Lanka correctly, but now that we know the result it does not seem to me altogether just to decide at this point that those that received the most votes should be favoured. If we had taken that decision before the votes were counted it would have been much fairer.

156. Does the representative of Sri Lanka accept the procedure suggested?

157. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, I will certainly not stand in your way as regards the procedure that you have suggested. I personally would have preferred it if the decision had been taken before the count was made; but after the count it is difficult to expect most members to agree to my suggestion, because they know exactly where they stand and would prefer the vagaries of the lot to determine the duration of their office.

158. But I should like to ask why, in the case of two groups which have equal representation, namely, the Asian

group and the group of Western European and other States, two different principles have been applied? I believe in the case of the group of Western European and other States you, Mr. President, suggested that five members should hold office for three years, four for two years and four for one year; but in the case of the Asian group you have suggested that four should hold office for three years, four for two years and five for one year. I cannot understand why the distribution is drawn between two groups with the same representation. And I certainly cannot understand what reason prompted the representative of India to agree to this distinction being drawn. If I had a satisfactory explanation of that perhaps I would be able to give a second thought to your suggestion; but otherwise I would insist on the same principle being applied to the number of members and duration of office in regard to the two groups with the same representation, namely, the Asian States and the Western European and other States; and I would agree with you if you would apply the same rule, that is, five members for three years, four for two years and four for one year.

159. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Under-Secretary-General to explain this question of mathematics.

160. Mr. MORSE (Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs): In response to the question of the representative of Sri Lanka, might I note that for those States elected in group D, to which the representative referred as the Western European and other States, the formula provides for four to be elected for a term of three years, five to be elected for a term of two years and four to be elected for a term of one year.

161. With reference to group B, to which the representative referred as the Asian group, the formula is as he stated it: four States to be elected for a term of three years, four for a term of two years and five for a term of one year.

162. This was accomplished at a meeting in which the chairman of each of the groups participated; lots were drawn and it came out in this fashion, with the agreement of all the representatives.

163. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I think the problem has been explained. As representatives know, the Secretariat was faced with the problem of distributing the seats for three different terms and also to obtain totals of 20, 19 and 19. Clearly that led to complications which resulted in differences in the groups. I think it was unavoidable for, to the extent that I can remember my school arithmetic, there is no other solution.

164. May I now take it that the General Assembly accepts this allocation?

It was so decided.

165. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): We shall now proceed to drawing of lots to determine the terms of office of the successful candidates.

The President proceeded to draw lots.

166. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The results of the drawing are as follows.

167. The following countries will serve for three years: Australia, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chile, German Democratic Republic, Iraq, Jordan, Madagascar, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania.

168. The following countries will serve for two years: Austria, Brazil, Cameroon, Federal Republic of Germany, Iceland, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Peru, Romania, Somalia, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Venezuela.

169. The following countries will serve for one year: Argentina, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Jamaica, Lebanon, Morocco, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Yugoslavia.

170. I wish to thank the tellers for their co-operation and to congratulate the countries that have been elected to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.

171. Now that we have elected the members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, we turn to the election of its Executive Director who, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), section II, paragraph 2, shall provide, among other things, substantive support to the Governing Council.

172. The Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General on this matter in document A/8965. In this note the Secretary-General informs the Assembly that he has the honour to nominate Mr. Maurice F. Strong, at present Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, to be the Executive Director for a term of four years, beginning on 1 January 1973.

173. Unless a vote is requested, I would suggest that the Assembly elect Mr. Strong as Executive Director by acclamation.

Mr. Maurice F. Strong was elected Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme by acclamation.

174. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Strong on the confidence which the Assembly has placed in him and to wish him every success in his valuable work.

175. Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden): It will be realized that my delegation feels that, after many years and many difficulties, but also much stimulating encouragement in combating the deterioration of the human environment and working for its improvement within the United Nations sphere, this moment is of some importance to us. I think that, representing a country which has a close relation with all the work so far done, the country which was host to the

Stockholm Conference, I may be allowed to speak on behalf of the Member States which today have shown their keen awareness of the importance of the problem and their keen interest in contributing to its solution.

176. The Secretary-General in nominating Mr. Maurice Strong has also, I think, shown awareness of the importance of the work which has been done and which is to be done in this field. I feel that it is appropriate to express at this moment our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the nomination, and also to express our gratitude and admiration to Mr. Strong for what he achieved during the time he served as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, both during the preparatory phase and afterwards. We have learned to know that he is a man of dynamic skill and dedicated leadership, and we are confident that the new secretariat will be well equipped to tackle its very challenging tasks.

177. My delegation—and I believe that I speak for many other delegations—wishes to congratulate Mr. Strong on his nomination and election to this new post which, I am afraid, may prove to be even more difficult than the one he has just filled.

178. I think that we should also congratulate ourselves, the United Nations and the secretariat unit which has just been established through this evening's election. I believe that the success of this secretariat—and I am confident it will succeed—will have a great impact in terms of substantive achievements in the sphere of the environment, but it will also be of great importance to the United Nations as an Organization because of the impression that it will, I am sure, make on public opinion in many countries.

179. Finally, I should like to add a personal note. I have had the opportunity, ever since I was posted to New York, to collaborate with Mr. Strong, and it is a pleasure for me to thank him for the fruitful and close co-operation we have had through all these years.

180. Mr. ODERO-JOWI (Kenya): I asked to be allowed to speak in order very briefly to thank the Secretary-General for nominating Mr. Maurice Strong to the post of Executive Director of our new organization. Also, I should like to thank Mr. Maurice Strong for having worked so hard and so devotedly to deserve the honour the General Assembly has just conferred on him.

181. Those of us who associated themselves with the preparatory stages of the Stockholm Conference, and those of us who attended the Conference itself, will remember that it was due to Mr. Strong's drive, devotion and dynamic leadership that the Conference proved to be the success that it was. I think we owe him a debt of gratitude and my delegation is happy that we have paid him a fitting tribute by electing him to organize and run a new organization, a unique organization which, fortunately, is going to be located in a developing country. We think that with his election to this post the United Nations has made history in a very significant manner, and we thank all the representatives for having made this mark in the history of mankind.

182. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I want to thank all the members of the Assembly for their patience and for having helped us to solve such a complicated arithmetical problem.

The meeting rose at 11.05 p.m.