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**SECURITY COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS**



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1610th MEETING: 9 DECEMBER 1971

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NOTE

Les cotes des documents de l'Organisation des Nations Unies se composent de lettres majuscules et de chiffres. La simple mention d'une cote dans un texte signifie qu'il s'agit d'un document de l'Organisation.

Les documents du Conseil de sécurité (cotes S/. . .) sont, en règle générale, publiés dans des *Suppléments* trimestriels aux *Documents officiels du Conseil de sécurité*. La date d'un tel document indique le supplément dans lequel on trouvera soit le texte en question, soit des indications le concernant.

Les résolutions du Conseil de sécurité, numérotées selon un système adopté en 1964, sont publiées, pour chaque année, dans un recueil de *Résolutions et décisions du Conseil de sécurité*. Ce nouveau système, appliqué rétroactivement aux résolutions antérieures au 1er janvier 1965, est entré pleinement en vigueur à cette date.

SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND TENTH MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 9 December 1971, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. I. B. TAYLOR-KAMARA (Sierra Leone).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Argentina, Belgium, Burundi, China, France, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Poland, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1610)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Letter dated 3 December 1971 from the representatives of Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the President of the Security Council (S/10409).

Tribute to the memory of Dr. Ralph Bunche, former Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs

1. The PRESIDENT: As President of the Council, it is with great regret that I inform members of the demise early this morning of Dr. Ralph Bunche, formerly Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs.

2. It is with a sad and heavy heart that I have to say these few words on behalf of my delegation. News has reached us that a personality highly respected in this Council chamber, removed by illness from our midst some months ago, has now been permanently snatched from us.

3. I speak of a man who in his own lifetime became, in the words of the Secretary-General, an "international institution in his own right, transcending both nationality and race in a way that is achieved by very few". That man, you all know, was Dr. Ralph Bunche, retired Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs. That post was held by him for 14 years.

4. Those of us who had been privileged to make his acquaintance admired his soft-spoken but tenacious disposition. His patience was extraordinary and had been likened to that of the Biblical Job.

5. The late Dr. Bunche was perhaps best known for the admirable and indefatigable manner in which, as Mediator in the Middle East in 1948 and 1949, he conducted negotiations in Palestine and later on in Rhodes, as well as elsewhere. We might also recall that the negotiations resulted in four Armistice Agreements between the Arab

States and Israel, and restored peace for a while in that region. For this he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In Africa, we remember his peace-keeping efforts and achievements in the new-born Republic of the Congo.

6. An intellectual of the highest calibre, Dr. Bunche gave dedicated service to the United Nations and to humanity as a whole. A result of his work is to be seen in the increased membership of this world Organization. Only last year he and his assistants concluded complex private negotiations which finally led to the solution of the problem of the status of Bahrain.

7. The world can never forget the extraordinary mind and quality of service given by this great man, whose ancestry included the blood of great Africans, who graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of California and won a doctorate in international relations at Harvard.

8. The United Nations will miss the greatest "trouble-shooter" of our times, and his family will miss the warmth and tenderness of a selfless and dedicated husband and father.

9. The President and the Government and people of Sierra Leone are distressed at the death of so outstanding a man.

10. May his soul rest in peace.

11. Mr. VINCI (Italy): Mr. President, I wish to associate myself with the expression of sorrow which you have just pronounced in memory of Dr. Ralph Bunche. My delegation also learnt with great grief of the passing away of this high-standing, retired Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs.

12. For many years he had put his intelligence, his skill and his patience at the service of our Organization, with fruitful results for the United Nations. His efforts and successes in the solution of difficult and dangerous international problems—and it is sufficient, I think, to recall the prominent role he played in the Middle East and Cyprus crises—are all very much in our minds.

13. His life, his dedication to peace and his devotion to the ideals of the Charter made of Ralph Bunche an outstanding figure in the history of the United States and of the United Nations. He was, indeed, one of the great peace-makers of our time. For us, in our work here, he has been an example, a great encouragement and an inspiration, and we all specially remember him during those last months serenely present among us, attending to his activities and

giving his personal advice, in spite of the illness that was undermining his body.

14. His death is a great loss for the United States, for the United Nations and for us all, especially for those among us who enjoyed and had the privilege of his friendship.

15. May I convey through you, Mr. President, the Italian delegation's feeling of sorrow to the Government and the delegation of the United States and to Dr. Bunche's family.

16. Mr. VAN USSEL (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): It was with a deep and understandable sadness that my delegation learned of the demise of Dr. Ralph Bunche. The devotion which that great man constantly gave the international community is equalled only by his renown as a tireless worker for peace, which earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950.

17. In the United Nations Dr. Bunche started as Director of the Department of Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories; later he became Acting Mediator in the Middle East conflict. His functions as Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs later led him to discharge various missions for the Organization. It was thus that he organized the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East and the United Nations Operation in the Congo, where he became the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. It was at that time that my Government had the privilege of co-operating most closely with him.

18. In his successive functions, Dr. Bunche distinguished himself by his devotion to the cause of fraternity and understanding among men and nations. In him our Organization loses a great servant, and the cause of peace, one of its most fervent advocates.

19. To his bereaved family and to the American nation which salutes his memory, I should like to express the condolences of my Government and to tell them how much we share in their grief.

20. Mr. FARAH (Somalia): Mr. President, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the sentiments which you have expressed on the death of Ralph Bunche. He was a man of peace and for peace in a world so savagely torn by war and dissension. I trust that you will convey to his wife and family the sympathy of my delegation in their great loss.

21. Sir Colin CROWE (United Kingdom): I should like to join members of the Council in their tribute to Dr. Bunche. He was the ideal of the international civil servant—in his honesty, his total integrity and his devotion to the United Nations.

22. As for myself, I worked closely with him 10 years ago and came not only to respect him but to hold him in the deepest affection. He was a great man, and his like will not soon be found again.

23. I should like you, Mr. President, to convey the sympathy of my Government, my delegation and myself to Mrs. Bunche, Dr. Bunche's family, the Secretary-General

and his colleagues in the United Nations, all of whom will miss him profoundly.

24. Mr. TERENCE (Burundi) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is deeply moved upon learning of the demise of a great man, a great universalist, a great internationalist.

25. Ralph Bunche was one of those rare men who was able to overcome race, religion and ideology, and to work for peace alone. He was a man who always strove to effect reconciliation among men and nations. Several times he had to serve in the Middle East; several times he had to be sent to the Congo, a neighbouring friendly country, and therefore he also served the cause of peace for the people and nation of Burundi.

26. We are deeply grieved to learn of his death and we should like, through you, Mr. President, and the delegation of the United States to transmit our heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of the United States and the bereaved family of Dr. Bunche. We express the hope that the United Nations will be true to the spirit of understanding and peace which always characterized Dr. Bunche.

27. Mr. JOUEJATI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, at this sad moment when you have announced the demise of a man of international standing, Dr. Ralph Bunche, the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to endorse the words that you have spoken regarding the brilliant and active career of this devoted servant of the United Nations, its cause and its objectives.

28. We also join in the condolences that you have addressed to his family, his friends and his Government. May the soul of this man who worked so hard for peace rest in peace and enjoy divine grace and mercy.

29. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (*interpretation from French*): I wish to endorse all the words that have been spoken here. I knew Ralph Bunche personally for more than 20 years. We followed his activities as a collaborator of Dag Hammarskjöld, U Thant and of many non-governmental organizations and associations. He was an international servant in the best meaning of the words; he was simply a man, a peace-loving man, a freedom-loving man and a man devoted to progress. His death is a great loss to the United Nations as a whole and to all delegations associated with the work of the Organization. To his family, to the Secretary-General, who had such deep affection for him, and to the delegation of the United States we express our deepest sympathy.

30. Mr. LANG (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): To be silent at the irreparable loss of our great and unforgettable friend Dr. Ralph Bunche would be unpardonable for those of us who knew him, worked with him and listened to him with respect and admiration for all these years. The United Nations has lost one of its greatest collaborators, U Thant has lost a brother-in-arms and the United States has lost a great citizen who brought glory to his country. My delegation shares that loss. Dr. Bunche's life must serve as an example to everyone. May he rest in peace.

31. Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Soviet delegation associates itself with the expressions of grief at the death of the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, Dr. Ralph Bunche. We would like to ask you, Mr. President, to transmit the condolences of the Soviet delegation on the occasion of this loss to the family of Dr. Bunche and to the United States Mission to the United Nations.

32. Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Ralph Bunche was an upright man who devoted all his efforts and ability to the cause of peace and the service of the United Nations. The Argentine delegation wholeheartedly joins in the tribute that is being paid to the memory of Dr. Bunche.

33. Mr. LUDWICZAK (Poland): Mr. President, the Polish delegation joins you and the representatives who preceded us in paying a tribute to the memory of the late Dr. Ralph Bunche.

34. It is in this organ more than anywhere else that his great contribution to the work of the United Nations and his pursuance of the cause of international peace ought to be remembered, and that his quiet, persevering efforts on behalf of a peaceful contribution to understanding among nations ought to be most highly appreciated. Nor can we forget his great experience as a true international servant, which he so readily shared with all of us; his devotion to the United Nations, which seemed to transcend his long sickness; and his moral qualities, which won him universal respect. We convey to the family of Dr. Bunche and to the Secretary-General our deepest condolences.

35. Mr. NAKAGAWA (Japan): It was with the greatest sorrow that my delegation heard of the death of Dr. Ralph Bunche. His name has long been associated with the peace-keeping and humanitarian work of the United Nations. The people of Japan join with the other people of the world in expressing the sincere feeling of sorrow at this sad news and wishes to extend deep condolences to the bereaved family, to the United Nations and to the Government and people of the United States.

36. Mr. PHILLIPS (United States of America): In the constellation of United Nations leaders, the name of Ralph Bunche holds a unique place of honour. His death marks the end of a United Nations era. His example will be a permanent inspiration to all of us who care about the future of the United Nations as a world organization for peace. We in the United States have special cause to be proud that this eminent American has given his greatest years of service to the United Nations and to the goals of the Charter. There could have been no finer embodiment of our country's enduring support for the United Nations than his impartial service at the highest levels of the world Organization for 25 years.

37. Dr. Bunche rose from humble beginnings, and through the force and goodness of his own character overcame the obstacles of poverty and racial bias. He learned, as he himself said, to fight without hatred and to harbour no bitterness against anybody. That facet of his character was

one secret of his peace-making and negotiating powers which enabled him to achieve the 1949 Armistice Agreements in the Middle East. For this, as others have noted, he earned the Nobel Peace Prize and was one of the youngest men ever to be so honoured. From relative obscurity the name of Ralph Bunche became a household word throughout the world.

38. Dr. Bunche dealt throughout his life with the weakness and combativeness of human nature, but he remained, in his own words, "an incurable optimist". He once explained the tragic recurrence of war by observing that throughout history man has been less virtuous, less constant, less rational, less peaceful than he knows how to be, than he is fully capable of being.

39. No man in United Nations history has given a finer example of those qualities of which man is capable at his best than Ralph Bunche. Through an illustrious career he has put his rare gifts at the service of peace as an international servant, and also at the service of justice and fair play for all people, regardless of race.

40. Finally, may I assure you, Mr. President, and the members of this Council, of our intention to transmit to the family of Ralph Bunche the condolences which have been so generously expressed here today. On behalf of the United States delegation may I also express the deep appreciation we feel for the moving sentiments which have been expressed here in honour of our distinguished native son.

41. Mr. FARAH (Somalia): I wish to propose that the record of this part of our meeting in which we have paid a tribute to Ralph Bunche be forwarded to his family so that they may know the esteem in which he was held by the international community.

42. The PRESIDENT: The representative of Somalia has suggested that the record of this meeting, containing the statements which representatives have made in tribute to the late Dr. Bunche, be transmitted to his family.

43. As President of the Security Council, I shall forward the record to the bereft family in accordance with his suggestion.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 3 December 1971 from the representatives of Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the President of the Security Council (S/10409)

44. The PRESIDENT: In a letter dated 3 December 1971 [S/10409], requesting an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation in the Arabian Gulf area, the representatives of Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen requested that they be allowed to participate without the right to vote in the Council's discussion of the matter.

45. In a letter dated 6 December 1971 [S/10431] the representative of Kuwait also requested to be allowed to participate without the right to vote in the Council's discussions.

46. Today, 9 December 1971, I have received a similar request from the representative of Iran [S/10436].

47. In accordance with the usual practice of the Council, and if there is no objection, I shall invite the representatives of Algeria, Iran Iraq, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to participate without the right to vote in the Council's discussion of this item.

48. As I hear no objection, it is so decided.

49. In view of the limited number of seats available at the Council table, and in accordance with the usual practice, I invite the representatives of Algeria, the Libyan Arab Republic, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Kuwait to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber on the understanding that they will be invited to the Council table when it is their turn to address the Council.

50. I also invite the representative of Iraq and the representative of Iran to take a place at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. T. El-Shibib (Iraq) and Mr. A. K. Afshar (Iran) took places at the Security Council table; and Mr. A. Rahal (Algeria), Mr. M. Maghribi (Libyan Arab Republic), Mr. A. M. Ismail (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen) and Mr. A. Y. Bishara (Kuwait) took the places reserved for them in the Council chamber.

51. The PRESIDENT: I wish to inform the Council that I have just received a letter dated 9 December 1971 [S/10439] from the Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates, requesting that his delegation be allowed to participate without the right to vote in the discussion on this item. If there is no objection, I shall invite the representative of the United Arab Emirates to participate without the right to vote in the Council's discussion of this item.

52. As there is no objection, I invite the representative of the United Arab Emirates to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber, on the understanding that he will be invited to take a place at the Council table when called upon to speak.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. A. Pachachi (United Arab Emirates) took the place reserved for him in the Council chamber.

53. The PRESIDENT: The Council will now begin its consideration of item 2 on the agenda. In addition to the document mentioned in the agenda, there is an additional document, document S/10434, which contains a letter dated 7 December 1971 from the representative of Iraq, together with the text of a cable from the Ruler of Ras Al-Khaima.

54. I call on the representative of Iraq.

55. Mr. EL-SHIBIB (Iraq): Mr. President, allow me to associate myself and my delegation with the words of condolence expressed by you and the members of the Council on the death of Dr. Ralph Bunche, former Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs. As the representative of a small country, a peace-loving country, I feel a particular sense of sorrow and loss at the demise of a man who was a dedicated international civil servant, a great believer in the Charter, a tireless servant in the task of fulfilling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Iraq, as a small country, puts its faith and hope in the belief that these principles and these purposes should be and will be the overriding rule of international life. I would ask the Secretariat to convey to Dr. Bunche's family and to his country our condolences and our sense of deep sorrow.

56. I should like to begin, Sir, by extending to you and to the members of the Council my sincere thanks and appreciation for your response to my Government's request to hold this meeting of the Council, and for allowing me to participate in the debate. The request of my Government and the Governments of Algeria, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen called for an urgent meeting of the Council in order that we might submit for its consideration our complaint regarding the recent events in the Arabian Gulf which have resulted in a tense and serious situation and a potential threat to the peace and security of the entire area, endangering the vital interests of my country.

57. As you have mentioned, Mr. President, our request was submitted on 3 December, but we are aware and appreciative of the most serious, tragic and dangerous situation of which the Council was seized, and the delay in holding this meeting is understood and appreciated by my delegation.

58. On 30 November 1971 my Government received the following cable from the Ruler of Ras Al-Khaima, Sheikh Saqr Bin Mohamad Ali Al-Qasimi:

"This morning, Tuesday the 30th of November 1971, Iranian troops have invaded the two islands of Tunb and thus violated the brotherly rights of neighbourliness and transgressed against our historical and national rights. The small garrison stationed for the defence of the islands and composed of six policemen valiantly resisted the invasion; four of them were killed and the other two injured. The two islands of Tunb are and have always been, since ancient times, an indivisible part of the territory of Ras Al-Khaima, and their occupation by Iran is a blatant aggression not only against Ras Al-Khaima alone, but against all the Arab people in all their countries. We call upon you to take immediate and effective measures to repulse the aggressors and to unite in support of Arab rights. We appeal to you to shoulder your full national responsibilities before God and history. We request you to submit the call to the United Nations, the Security Council and the Council of the League of Arab States. Awaiting your speedy reply, we wish you success."

59. Thus, I have come to the Council to submit not the complaint of my own Government only, but also that of a

small and helpless Arab State which has no means to defend itself against aggression.

60. The two islands of the greater and lesser Tunb are situated at the exit of the Straits of Hormuz which connect the Arab Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

61. Here may I pause for a moment to say that, notwithstanding the map generously provided by the Iranian delegation, I would request the Secretariat of the Security Council to distribute to members of the Council a map which shows the position of the islands concerned in our debate, because there are many representatives whose backs are turned to the other map so that they cannot profit from the generosity of the Iranian delegation.

62. The Iranian invasion of these two islands was the culmination of the often repeated threats by the highest authorities in Iran to "regain" the alleged rights of Iran to the islands by the use of force. This indefensible act by the Government of Iran is clearly a flagrant violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and particularly Article 2, paragraph 4, which reads:

"All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations."

63. A day prior to the invasion of the two Tunb islands, Iran had occupied part of the adjacent island of Abu Musa under the pretext of an alleged agreement with the Sheikh of Al-Sharjah, of whose territory this island is an indivisible part. The so-called agreement was supposedly concluded just before the occupation, and while the Government of the United Kingdom was responsible for the territorial integrity of the territories of the States constituting the "Trucial Coast". The obligations of the United Kingdom emanate from agreements concluded previously with the rulers of these States in return for commitments not to dispose of their lands or parts thereof in any manner except to the Government of the United Kingdom, as we shall see later. Thus the alleged agreement between the Government of Iran and the ruler of Al-Sharjah was concluded at a time when the latter had not yet fully regained the right to enter into any international commitment, with or without the consent and approval of the Government of the United Kingdom.

64. The invasion of the Tunb islands and the partial occupation of the island of Abu Musa was the latest step in a policy of expansion by the Government of Iran, and a blatant demonstration of the collusion between Iran and the United Kingdom Government to bequeath to Iran the colonial role played in the area by Britain for more than three centuries.

65. Iranian rulers have intermittently over many years laid claims to certain areas and islands in the Arabian Gulf which have been under Arab jurisdiction for centuries. There have even been times when Iranian Governments have claimed the whole Gulf area. In a letter addressed to the British Government in 1844, the Persian Prime Minister

Haji Meerza Aghassi stated that the whole Gulf "from the commencement of Shatt-Al-Arab to Muscat belongs to Persia, and all the islands of the sea, without exception, and without participation of any other government, belong entirely to Persia". I have quoted from the Foreign Office Papers, dated 31 May 1845. The letter from the Persian Prime Minister was dated 15 March 1844.

66. In recent years such ludicrous blanket claims were reduced in scope and the Iranian Government first pressed forth its claims to the islands of Bahrain, then increasingly concentrated its demands on the acquisition of the three islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and the Lesser Tunbs, particularly after the announcement in 1968 of the British Government's intentions to withdraw from the Gulf by the end of 1971. Abu Musa and the Greater Tunb are sparsely inhabited; the Lesser Tunb is uninhabited.

67. All three islands, however, are strategically situated at the approaches to the Strait of Hormuz, which is the Arabian Gulf outlet into the high seas.

68. In order to pave the way for the actual seizure of the three islands upon British withdrawal from the Gulf, the Government of Iran, with the aid and connivance of the United Kingdom and the United States, embarked on a twofold propaganda campaign resting on three major allegations.

69. First, there are the repeated claims by Iran of alleged historical rights to the islands. In a recent interview with representatives of the international press, the Shah of Iran stated the following, in connexion with the Gulf:

"What we are demanding is what has always belonged to our country throughout history. . . . It is perfectly natural and reasonable that, now that imperialism is withdrawing, Iran should regain what has always been its possession historically."

That was a quotation from the Iranian newspaper *Kayhan International*, dated 23 October 1971.

70. Secondly, there is the claim, particularly by Iran and the United States, that British withdrawal from the Arabian Gulf would create a so-called power vacuum in the area, insinuating that such an alleged "vacuum" should be filled by Iran. An article which appeared in *The New York Times* on 25 July 1971 starts with the following paragraph:

"Iran's military power on land, in the air and on the sea is being built up in the Middle East under a billion-dollar defence programme quietly underwritten by the United States and Britain in preparation for British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf later this year."

The article continues:

"This whole build-up, according to officials"—meaning Washington officials—"is designed to fill the vacuum that would have been created by the British departure and to counter Soviet influence and Arab radical moves in the strategic Persian Gulf, whose coastal States and islands produce much of the oil on which the United States, Western Europe and Japan depend."

71. The third contention put forward by Iran is the strategic value to Iran of these islands. In the interview with the press, which I have already mentioned, the Shah of Iran referred—and here again I quote from the issue of *Kayhan International*, dated 23 October 1971—“to the possibility of certain strategic positions”—meaning these three islands—“falling into the wrong hands: a small group of men using a boat and a bazooka could threaten navigation in the waterway”.

72. Thus, the invasion of the two Tunb islands and the incursion on Abu Musa island by the Iranian forces rests, it would seem, on three major allegations and assumptions: alleged historical rights, filling a presumed “political vacuum” in the area and, finally, the strategic value of the islands. Allow me now to deal with these three allegations one by one.

73. Let us take historical rights first. The claim of the rulers of Iran to the three islands and on some occasions to the whole Gulf, to which I have previously referred, is not substantiated by any historical or legal facts and documents. Iran has never, to our knowledge, put forward a document stating any historical grounds for its claim to the islands. History, in fact, clearly shows not only that these islands have always been under Arab jurisdiction, but that Arab domination often extended to the islands situated off the Iranian coastline—such as Qishm, Lingeh, Shinas and Hormuz—and sometimes reached farther east to the Persian littoral.

74. Sir Arnold Wilson—of whom, I am told, the British delegation is very much aware—one of the foremost authorities on the Gulf, who served in the area for many years, states the following on page 8 of his book, which was first published in 1928, entitled *The Persian Gulf*:

“The Arabian coastal region is peopled almost exclusively by Arabs, but alien elements occur in many of the towns. . . . At the head of the Persian Gulf the indigenous population is principally Arab, while, along the Persian littoral from the Shatt-Al-Arab as far as the Strait of Hormuz, is composed of a medley of races and racial blends, of which the most important elements are Persians and Persian Arabs, the latter of whom may be described as Arabs under Persian rule who have become denationalized by settlement, subjection or intermarriage.”

75. Further on in that work, specifically on page 11, Sir Arnold Wilson also states:

“The three outstanding indigenous spheres of dominion of the Persian Gulf, all through these events”—meaning in the eighteenth century—“were the Persians in the north-east, the Turks in the north, and the Arabs in the south. Each had its period of supremacy, but, finally, the controlling element seemed to be the Omani Arabs of Muscat whose power extended both to the African coast and to India.”

76. The Arab character of the Gulf is further confirmed in a recent study, namely, the special report published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington and entitled “The Gulf”, which states on page 34:

“Broadly speaking, the western shores of the Gulf are inhabited by Arabs and the eastern shore by Iranians. There are, however, several qualifications to this. Descendants of groups who originated in Iran, Baluchistan and in the Indian subcontinent are still to be found along the Arab coast. More importantly, in Khuzistan, the southwestern province of Iran, formerly called Arabistan, the population is still partly Arab, while other Arab communities are spread extensively throughout the coastal plain of Iran.

“As late as the nineteenth century many of these groups still wielded independent local power, and at that time it would have certainly been more appropriate, though the expression was not then used, to speak of an Arab Gulf.”

77. From what I have just quoted it is amply demonstrated that even the eastern coast of the Gulf is largely Arab in character. For Iran to allege that islands which have been Arab throughout centuries should now belong to Iran is going beyond the bounds of all logic and reason.

78. Now let us turn to the theory of a “power vacuum”. This theory is evidently an imperialistic and colonial concept, a concept with which we have all become familiar, a vestige of the scramble of the colonial Powers—Portuguese, Dutch and British—since the fifteenth century for acquisition of territories and ascendancy in the Arabian Gulf area. It is unfortunate that this concept is now being employed in major power politics by virtue of which Iran has been chosen by the United States and the United Kingdom to replace the latter in exercising hegemony over the area. As early as February 1969 the special report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies entitled “The Gulf” and referred to earlier undertook to study the implications of British withdrawal from the area. On page 94 of the report we read:

“For the past 20 years the British and, perhaps to a lesser extent, the United States have regarded Iran as a major obstacle to Soviet expansion towards the Gulf. This would still seem to be so from London’s point of view, but the attitude of Washington towards the Gulf seems to be one of ‘wait and see’”.

79. The report also states that the British Government has agreed to sell a considerable quantity of arms to Iran, but the attitude of the United States two years later, as the article in *The New York Times* of 25 July indicated, was no longer one of “wait and see” but of being the active patron of Iran in its assumption to fill the alleged vacuum in the area; thus the underwriting of the \$1 billion programme of the massive armament of Iran referred to in that article.

80. My Government firmly rejects the fallacy of the so-called power vacuum. I should like to refer to what I stated in the general debate at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly, on 7 October 1971:

“It is the firm belief of my Government that the future of peace and tranquillity in the Gulf can only be assured through co-operation among the States of that region, a co-operation based upon complete equality and respect

for each other's sovereignty and independence and conforming to the strict rules of international law. In this respect it is imperative that all territorial claims and ambitions be relinquished."¹

Forgive me for quoting myself, but that is a rather pertinent point. On the very day on which I made that statement I was heartened to hear the permanent representative of Iran giving me and the General Assembly assurance in the following words:

"I would like to assure the permanent representative of Iraq that we have absolutely no territorial ambitions with regard to anyone."²

Unfortunately the assurances of the Government of Iran have proved as worthless as its claims are baseless.

81. Let me turn now to the third allegation or claim—strategic importance. The waters of the Gulf cover an area of 97,000 square miles, with a northern limit of 30 degrees north. It extends south-east for about 500 miles, and its width varies from 180 miles to 26 miles at the Strait of Hormuz. I am sorry if I am boring the Council with these geographical details, but I believe they are very pertinent to the argument. The shorelines of the following States stretch from the head of the Gulf at Shatt-Al-Arab—the Iraqi national river formed by the confluence of the two rivers flowing through Iraq, the Tigris and the Euphrates: Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the seven sheikdoms of the Trucial coast, namely, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Qaiwain, Ras Al-Khaima and Fujairah, and Qatar and Oman. Iran occupies the entire north-eastern shore.

82. The Gulf is remarkably shallow for so large an area of water. Soundings on the Gulf range from 240 to 300 feet, and the line of greatest depth lies much nearer to the Persian coast than the Arabian coast, the consequence being that the whole of the western and southern shore is extremely shallow and shelving, making it impossible for ships of 5,000 tons or more to approach within five miles of the shore, according to the information found in *The Persian Gulf Pilot* of 1924. The shallowness is intensified by an intricate maze of shoals and reefs in the southern sweep of the Gulf.

83. The report of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, which I referred to earlier, and the article in *The New York Times* relate the strategic significance to two main factors, namely, communications and oil. Evidently the purchasers of oil have as much interest in seeing that the flow of oil through the Straits is not disrupted as the oil producing countries themselves. It will be recalled that Iran is not the only major oil producing country of the Gulf; indeed most of the other littoral countries, all of them Arab and including Iraq, are also major oil producers.

84. If security and stability in the area were the major concerns of the United Kingdom, the United States and their client Iran, the Governments of those States should be

reminded that security and stability can truly be achieved only through the co-operation of the States situated on the shelf. Are the threats of the use of force, the claims to territories, the abrogation of international agreements, the invasion and occupation of territories by armed forces—all of which actions constitute violations of the principles of the Charter and a betrayal of its purposes—conducive to security and stability? I submit that the leaders of Iran have by their covetous and expansionist policies endangered the very purposes for which Iran's armed forces have been ostensibly bolstered and Iranian interests fostered by the erstwhile colonial Power in the Gulf. I assure the Council that security and stability are the vital concern of all the States of the Gulf, including my own. It is in our interest to ensure that stability should prevail in the Gulf to safeguard the economic lifeline of our respective countries. The Straits of Hormuz and the strategic three islands now illegally occupied by Iran do control the lifeline of the littoral States, which have no outlet to the high seas other than through the Strait. Iraq is among those States, whereas Iran, occupying the whole eastern coastline of the Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, has direct outlets on the Arabian Sea.

85. The Iranian rulers are therefore not motivated by considerations of stability and security in the area. They are, rather, obsessed by the dreams of grandeur that drive them to adopt policies of territorial aggrandizement in order to re-establish an empire which has been dead and buried since the time of Alexander the Great.

86. Their attempts are all too reminiscent of Mussolini's disastrous dreams of reviving the Roman Empire. No, the Iranian Government is not concerned with security and stability. It is bent upon expansionism. The security of the region can best be achieved and guaranteed by co-operation among the Gulf States within an agreed framework. But obviously the rulers of Iran are not thinking in these terms. They already fancy themselves as the great Power in the area, and by their actions they prove their readiness not for co-operation but rather for confrontation.

87. We are not the only ones who see recent developments in this light. *The Guardian* of London, dated 3 December 1971, after this infamous action by the Iranian forces, had similar misgivings about the actions of the Iranian Government. Let me quote a few words:

"Iran has always said it would take the islands one way or another, for strategic reasons. Britain was clearly not going to carry out its defence obligations to the Sheikdoms in the last stage of its military pull-out, and against Iran. But the fact remains that the West was looking to Iran, the local Power, to ensure regional stability. But it is Iran which has managed to bring latent strains between the Arabs and itself to an open crisis alarmingly swiftly. This is a risky thing to have done. The Gulf States contain the seeds of instability. . . . The vacuum left by the British withdrawal will be filled successively by the local Powers only if tensions are kept to a minimum."

88. We reject the appointment of Iran, or any other single State, as the sole guardian and guarantor of the continuation of the flow of the Gulf oil to the outside world. The Government of Iraq also rejects the control by Iran of the

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1956th meeting, para. 63.

² *Ibid.*, 1957th meeting, para. 278.

only outlet of Iraq's commerce to the high seas. In fact the parable of the Shah of "A group of men in a boat with a bazooka" applies more to Iran than to anybody else. It is Iran now that is straddling the Strait of Hormuz, not only with a few men and a bazooka, but, according to the latest reports, with modern armaments, including sophisticated missiles, which have already been installed on the occupied islands. We have every reason to believe that Iran will use this military build-up to threaten the sole commercial and main oil artery of Iraq, and to bring pressure to bear on my country, and other countries of the area, in fulfilment of Iranian expansionist policies.

89. The article of *The New York Times* of 25 July 1971—forgive me for quoting again from it, but it is most informative—provides very revealing and alarming information of the tripartite collusion that fitted Iran for its present aggressive role. Let me read from it:

"Unpublicized United States credits, including the rare participation of the Export-Import Bank, are financing the current secret deliveries of the F-4-E model of the supersonic fighter-bomber.

"The Bank usually refuses to finance sales of military equipment. Officials of the Bank declined this week to discuss the Iranian credits.

"Britain is selling Iran 800 new tanks, partly on credit, this year"—and we, knowing the financial situation of the United Kingdom may wonder at that—"as well as missile-equipped frigates and large armoured Hovercraft for troop transport."

I shall continue the quotation:

"In the last two years, Washington had provided credits for \$220 million worth of Iranian aircraft purchases in the United States. They covered 31 Phantoms of the earliest F-4-D model and 109 fighters of the type P-4, already in service in Iran.

"Under present plans, the Iranian Air Force is to be expanded to a total of 135 Phantoms by 1975, to serve alongside the F-3 and F-86 squadrons already in its possession."

Allow me to quote a little further:

"To bolster its American-built armour force, the Iranian Government signed an agreement with Britain early this year to buy 330 Chieftain tanks and ammunition for \$135 million.

"Last month, it contracted to buy an additional 470 Chieftains for \$240 million. The first 36 Chieftains are to be delivered in 1971.

"The Shah is said to believe that a high degree of military mobility is essential to control the Persian Gulf area."—and I emphasize the word "control"—"Therefore, his Government has been buying the most modern supersonic aircraft, new Hovercraft and helicopters, as well as hundreds of tanks suited to the mountain and desert terrain of Iran and adjoining countries.

"A base for the Hovercraft has been built on the Island of Kharg off the Iranian coast in the northern section of the Gulf.

"Iranian ground troops and the Hovercrafts are to be supported by a fleet of more than 200 helicopters."

90. Now, let us pause and ask ourselves the following questions: first, would small and poor Ras Al-Khaima, to whom the two occupied Tumb islands belong—and towards whom the great victorious and gallant armada of the Iranian Imperial Forces headed on the night of the 30th—with a population of only 25,000 inhabitants, pose any threat to Iran even with a "bazooka" on the Greater Tumb? Secondly, against whom is this formidable military Power supposed to be used?

91. My Government has every reason to believe that this huge military, air and naval power is being built to support the expansionist policy of Iran, to threaten every neighbouring country that resists this policy of hegemony and expansion, and to impose a self-proclaimed hegemony over the area. Thus, old Imperial interests are preserved, though it is "imperialism by proxy".

92. It will be recalled that in April 1969, Iran declared as "null and void" the 1937 Boundary Treaty between Iraq and Iran,³ and claimed equal sovereignty, in defiance of that Treaty, with Iraq over the Iraqi national river of Shatt-Al-Arab. That unilateral abrogation of a valid and mutually binding boundary treaty violated the first and foremost tenet of international law: namely, the sanctity of treaties.

93. The Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations on that occasion addressed two official notes to the President of the Security Council regarding that indefensible act by the Government of Iran and reaffirming Iraq's rights, as well as its obligations under that Treaty. Here I refer to document S/9205 of 13 May 1969 and document S/9323 of 11 July 1969.

94. That violation by Iran of the elementary principles of international law was accompanied by a show of force all along the Iraqi-Iranian borders, and particularly along Shatt-Al-Arab, our only outlet to the Gulf. In response to the policy of restraint pursued by the Iraqi Government, Iran persisted in its illegal acts and particularly in defying the Iraqi regulations designed to ensure the safety of navigation in the river.

95. Iran also declined to accede to our request, addressed to the Secretary-General, to send a special mission or a special representative to investigate the troop concentrations along our common borders. Prior to the occupation of the three Gulf islands, Iran's illegal claim to equal sovereignty with Iraq over Shatt-Al-Arab constituted another attempt at territorial expansion by the Government of Iran. My Government condemns and totally rejects both these acts. We have every reason to believe that the Iranian

³ Boundary Treaty between the Kingdom of Iraq and the Empire of Iran, signed at Teheran on 4 July 1937 (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. CXC, 1938, No. 4423).

occupation of the islands is designed to strengthen Iran in the implementation of its expansionist policy vis-à-vis my country. The Government of Iraq reserves its right, therefore, to take any and every action regarding both of Iran's illegal acts in order to protect Iraq's territorial integrity and its vital interests in the Arabian Gulf.

96. Now, there is a very interesting aspect to all this, and that is the responsibility of the United Kingdom in this matter. Perhaps the representative of the United Kingdom may see fit to enlighten the Council on this question. But allow me first to say a few words in this connexion.

97. In what may appear a minor drama, the implications of which should never, under any circumstances, be minimized, the role of the Government of the United Kingdom has been the usual one whenever it left any of its colonial possessions: a role of perfidy, scuttling, and sowing the seeds of trouble and enmity.

98. The Government of the United Kingdom, between 1820 and 1922, concluded various agreements and obtained several commitments from the rulers of the Trucial States. The undertakings of the rulers more often than not were clearly defined, while the obligations of the British Empire were left, as usual, vague and ambiguous. But the commitment of the United Kingdom to respect and preserve the territorial integrity of those States was acknowledged in all of the agreements. The "exclusive agreements" concluded with the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast between 6 and 8 March 1892 conferred on the United Kingdom even more rights to interfere in the internal affairs of the States inasmuch as the rulers committed themselves and their heirs and successors to the following undertakings, and here let me quote from a sample agreement between the United Kingdom and the Ruler of Al-Sharjah:

"1. That I will on no account enter into any agreement or correspondence with any Power other than the British Government.

"2. That without the assent of the British Government, I will not consent to the residence within my territory of the agent of any other Government.

"3. That I will on no account cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of my territory, save to the British Government."

99. Although the responsibility of the United Kingdom Government to protect the territorial integrity of the States was not explicitly mentioned in so many words, it is obvious that the undertaking of each of the rulers in article 3 of the executed agreements bound the Sheikhs not to cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of their territory, save to the British Government. This definitely constituted a commitment that no legal disposition of the territory by its ruler was valid if it was not directly made to the British Government. The British Government may dispute the point of whether a legal protectorate situation exists here, but the terms of the agreements of March 1892, particularly articles 1 and 3, prove beyond any shadow of doubt Britain's responsibility for the territorial integrity of each and every one of the Trucial States.

100. In accordance with the terms of the exclusive agreement of 1892, no ruler of any Trucial State could conclude any agreement with a third Power affecting the territorial integrity of the State. Accordingly, the alleged agreement between the Ruler of Al-Sharjah and the Government of Iran with regard to the island of Abu Musa is null and void, as the Ruler was not then, on 29 November 1971, in possession of the sovereign right to "enter into . . . agreement or correspondence with any Power other than the British Government", according to the terms of the treaty, nor was he to dispose of the territory or any part thereof "save to the British Government". And much as Iran may wish to play the part of the British Empire, the Iranian Government is not yet the British Government.

101. With regard to the islands of the two Tunbs, the Government of the United Kingdom always acknowledged and reaffirmed on various occasions that they were an integral part of Ras Al-Khaima, and that they were Arab islands. Accordingly, the United Kingdom has failed to honour its obligations towards Ras Al-Khaima in not defending those two islands where protection was a British responsibility. The issue of *The Times* of London of 1 December 1971, one day after the occupation, acknowledged Britain's responsibility when it said:

"Iran has thus in the end settled her claim by force just before Britain's treaties of protection with the Trucial Sheikdoms were due to end. . . . Technically, therefore, Britain was still responsible for the defence of the Greater Tunb at the time of the [Iranian] landing."

102. Under the circumstances, it is definitely established that the United Kingdom has reneged on its international obligations and has to be condemned for not living up to those obligations. British apologists have maintained, since the occupation, that the Sheikh of Ras Al-Khaima, as *The Times* put it, "has only himself to blame" because he refused to barter away the integrity of his territory on the same lines as in the case of Al-Sharjah, under the circumstances. If Iran was prepared to "make a deal" similar to that with regard to Abu Musa, then this would prove only one thing: that Iran had no substance to its claim to the islands, historical or otherwise, and that the sole purpose of Iran is the control of the Straits of Hormuz, and thereby the control of the whole Arabian Gulf, whether that aim can be achieved by a "deal" or through naked aggression, as happened with the two Tunb islands.

103. Blaming the Sheikh of Ras Al-Khaima will not exonerate either Iran or the United Kingdom of their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations or under the treaties with the Trucial States. Fortunately, there are some British voices which echo this. *The Financial Times* of 1 December 1971 had this to say about the illegal act of occupation by Iran and the abysmal inaction of the British Government:

"Clearly, the British Government, which claimed it would have been unrealistic to exercise treaty responsibilities a day before they were due to end, must be embarrassed, and many even risk speculation that there was collusion with the Iranian authorities."

What else could one say of Britain's inaction and of its strange silence? It did not even deem it necessary to advise the United Nations of the situation, or to bring the matter to the Security Council when it knew very well of the serious threat of force. What else but collusion can one infer?

104. The ultimate conclusion from this dangerous situation created by the collusion of Iran and the United Kingdom, aided and abetted by the United States, is the following.

105. First, the alleged agreement between Iran and the Sheikh of Al-Sharjah regarding the island of Abu Musa is not valid for a number of good reasons. It was concluded when the Sheikh was bound by the terms of the exclusive Agreement of 1892 with the United Kingdom and had no power to "enter into any agreement or correspondence with any Power other than the British Government". I was quoting from treaties. It was concluded under duress, and the threat that was carried out against Ras Al-Khaima when its ruler refused to submit to those threats and barter away his territory is a clear example and proof.

106. Second, with the invasion of the two islands of Tunb, Iran has violated its international obligations under the Charter, which recognizes the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by threat or the use of force, and particularly Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter.

107. It has been reported that the Iranian forces occupying the Greater Tunb have now deported all the inhabitants of that island and that they have been dumped on the Arabian mainland.

108. The smallness of Ras Al-Khaima, the Tunb islands, and the number of the islanders ejected by Iran should not be dismissed as being too insignificant to merit the attention of this august body. The injustices, grievances and aggressions suffered by Ras Al-Khaima are only too real and drastic. How often has history witnessed critical and highly dangerous situations arising from acts of aggression and injustices committed against minor States? But it is precisely the small States which are in greatest need of protection by the United Nations. Where else should they appeal for the safeguarding of their interests and their territorial integrity?

109. We profoundly believe that the United Nations should show special concern for the fate of countries like Ras Al-Khaima. It had been under the total domination of a colonial Power for over a century and a half. It suddenly finds itself left out in the cold because the colonial Power had decided, for its own interests, to withdraw without making any provision for the defence of the small island and, in fact, colluding with other Powers to endanger the territorial integrity of that very small State.

110. Overnight that small State is left as a helpless prey to the vicious assaults of any predator. In the case of Ras Al-Khaima the attack, as we have seen, took place before the departing colonial Power had actually withdrawn—and the protecting Power had indeed encouraged the ambitious aggressor to grab what it covets when it can. To add insult

to injury, the erstwhile protector of the victim turns around and accuses the helpless creature of being responsible for this dismal state of affairs, because it refused to succumb to the threats of the aggressor in the first place.

111. If such ignominious actions are allowed to pass in silence, if no counter-action is taken by the international community to remedy the injuries inflicted on the weakest and the smallest of its members, then not only shall we be betraying the noble principles of the Charter but we shall also prove that the world today is ruled by laws which are in fact far worse than the law of the jungle.

112. The Iranian Government has, by its armed aggression, created an extremely critical situation in the area. The Government of Iraq has exercised extreme self-restraint in spite of the fact that the Iranian aggressions and violations of the Charter directly threaten Iraqi interests. My Government's overriding consideration has been the preservation of peace in the area. We sincerely hope that the crisis can be settled peacefully by the United Nations.

113. We therefore appeal to you, distinguished members of the Security Council, to shoulder your responsibilities, to take all effective measures to condemn the aggressors and their British collaborators, and to ensure the withdrawal of the forces of occupation. Should the Council fail to fulfil its duties in this instance, it would only serve to encourage any expansionist State to resort to all the actions specifically prohibited in the Charter in order to realize whatever territorial ambitions it harbours against its neighbours. The failure of the Council to take appropriate action would then leave no option to others—like ourselves—but to believe that force is the only answer to aggression, and we would then act accordingly.

114. The PRESIDENT: I now invite the representative of Kuwait to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

115. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): At the outset, I should like to express my delegation's profound condolences and deep sympathy on the passing of Dr. Ralph Bunche. He was indeed a man of great integrity and honesty. May God rest his soul in peace.

116. Mr. President, may I express the gratitude of my delegation for your granting me the opportunity to address the Council on this highly important question. You have been an outstanding politician and an exponent of the African cause during your long service in your country. We should congratulate ourselves for having such an able veteran of Africa and of the principles of the United Nations presiding over the deliberations of the Security Council.

117. Let me admit, first of all, that for me it is an awesome experience to participate in the Security Council deliberations on a matter in which Iran is involved. I enjoyed, during the frequent visits which I paid to Teheran, the exquisite hospitality and affability of the Iranian people, with whom we have historical, cultural and religious ties. The links between the Arabs and the Persians go back to the early era of Islam, and many years before Islam

indeed. Needless to say, both peoples have benefited from those old links.

118. Thousands of Iranians have been living in Kuwait. They are extremely happy with the conditions that surround them. The southern part of Iran is inhabited by many Arabs and by Iranians of Arab origin. During the past centuries there was always unrestricted traffic between the two sides of the Gulf.

119. Notwithstanding the flow of harmony, there were occasional differences between the Arab States and the Government of Iran, which were always solved amicably and in a spirit of co-operation and friendliness. For there are always imperative factors which necessitate the overcoming of differences in their embryonic stages. These factors are common religious background, neighbourliness, long historical ties, similarity of traditions and common values.

120. However, contrary to all the Iranian traditions in solving the problems peacefully—and I have in mind the question of Bahrain, in which His Majesty the Shah demonstrated his flexibility and his statesmanship; I shall not forget that, and my Government cherishes that with great admiration—the Iranian Government, on Tuesday, 30 November 1971, occupied without any provocation the Arab islands of Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb that have belonged for centuries to Ras Al-Khaima. The Iranian troops landed also on a certain area of Abu Musa Island, which belongs to Sharjah.

121. In so doing, the Iranian Government has unravelled the *dénouement* of a mysterious drama. Those who have been involved in the quest for a peaceful solution to this problem—and I am one of them fortunately—suffer not only from the suspense of the play, but also from the tragically unexpected end.

122. Let me now start from the first act.

123. Immediately after the British Government's announcement that Britain would withdraw from the Gulf by the end of 1971, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait declared that Kuwait welcomed the British withdrawal from the Arabian Gulf, and that Kuwait believed that the littoral States of the Gulf should be responsible for the security of the area. Kuwait, motivated by its belief that the stability and security of the Gulf should continue unhampered, spent tireless efforts to assist the Emirates of the Gulf to lay down the foundations of a federation that would encompass the nine Gulf Emirates. On 28 February Dubai's agreement was announced, as a basis for the federation of the Emirates of the Gulf. With all the efforts undertaken by Kuwait, and despite the series of conferences and meetings among the Rulers of those Emirates, the federation did not stand on its feet at that time. The reason was simple. Iran blocked the road to federation, since it set a condition for its support for the proposed federation. The condition was "no islands, no federation". It wanted the Arab islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. When the Government of Kuwait realized the seriousness of the Iranian condition, a flurry of correspondence and trips between Kuwait and Teheran started. The aim of the

Government of Kuwait was to persuade Iran not to resort to force in solving the problem of the three Islands. Iran's argument was as follows: "The islands belong to us, we want them back, by peaceful means or by force, and Iran would not stop short of that".

124. That was the conclusion of the many letters exchanged between Teheran and Kuwait. The Foreign Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber and the Foreign Minister of Iran, Ardeshir Zahedi, met in Jeddah in March 1970, during the Conference of the Islamic Countries. The "Islands Affair" was discussed extensively, but to no avail. On 4 August 1970, Mr. Zahedi visited Kuwait officially. The islands were the main issue in the discussions which took place between my Foreign Minister and Mr. Zahedi. In that meeting Mr. Zahedi reaffirmed Iran's determination to occupy the islands, if no other solution consonant with the Iranian demand was found. He distinctly elaborated on Iran's opposition to any federation in the Gulf, if the Iranian claim on the islands was not favourably accepted. However, the Foreign Minister of Kuwait explained clearly Kuwait's position. It is briefly as follows: first, an unshakable belief that every problem can be solved peacefully; second, the belief that no problem is insoluble, since all problems of the world are man-made; third, complete adherence to the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the use of force for solving problems.

125. Although Mr. Zahedi expressed his country's belief in self-determination and its dedication to the Charter of the United Nations, he gave no assurances at all that Iran would not resort to force. On the contrary, he left us with the unmistakable impression that the Iranian Government was determined to use force to occupy the Arab islands.

126. In December 1970 during the Conference of the Islamic Countries in Karachi, my Foreign Minister met Mr. Zahedi and again the question of the islands was the dominant issue. Mr. Zahedi was more explicit in spelling out the Iranian design on the Arab islands.

127. This unprecedented flurry in the diplomatic history of our area culminated in an official visit paid by my Foreign Minister to Teheran on 8 August 1971.

128. On 9 and 10 August 1971 the Foreign Minister of Kuwait held extensive meetings with Mr. Zahedi on the islands problem. I was involved in those meetings.

129. On 11 August the Foreign Minister of Kuwait met His Majesty the Shah of Iran. During that visit my Foreign Minister suggested that the Arab islands should be demilitarized; such a suggestion meant that the islands would not be used for military purposes, that the Arab Emirates would under no circumstances place military installations on them, and that the sovereignty of the Arab Emirates on the islands should not be questioned. Iran categorically rejected this proposal. Kuwait, prompted by its unlimited goodwill and its wish to ensure the continuance of the stability and the security of the Gulf area, has been second to none in its unstinting attempts to work out an acceptable formula that might secure the consent of all parties concerned in this tragedy.

130. Iran, which only recently gave the United Nations a replica of the Charter of Cyrus on human rights, and which has been trying to promote its image as a country that espouses scrupulously the United Nations purposes and principles, disrupted and now unnecessarily threatens the security of the Gulf by its occupation of the Arab islands. This occupation was planned and carried out with complete disregard of the Charter of the United Nations and its tenets, especially Article 2, paragraph 3, which reads:

"All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered."

Article 2, paragraph 4, reads:

"All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations."

131. One of the most sacred principles of the Charter is the inadmissibility of territorial acquisition by force. Iran flagrantly annexed the Arab islands by force, in contravention of the Charter.

132. On Tuesday, 30 November 1971, the Foreign Minister of Kuwait said in the Parliament that Kuwait had always maintained the view that these islands "are Arab islands, historically, and demographically. Kuwait has exhausted all efforts to affirm this fact to all parties concerned; and it always maintains the view that these islands are always Arab islands and that it disapproves of the Iranian occupation, and deplores the use of force".

133. The Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait called in the Chargé d'affaires of Iran in Kuwait and conveyed to him that Kuwait deplored the Iranian action on the Arab islands. He also called in the British Ambassador in Kuwait and lodged a strong protest against Britain for its ignoble role in this tragedy. The Ambassadors of France, the Soviet Union, China and the United States were called in by the Under-Secretary and were informed of Kuwait's viewpoint.

134. The Iranians, throughout all our contacts with them, maintained the view that these islands belonged to Iran and that Britain usurped them 150 years ago. Our argument was peaceful and simple. We told Iran that it could refer the case to the International Court of Justice or accept arbitration. But all our bids for a peaceful solution were turned down. No spirit of accommodation was detected; only an unbridled determination to use force to occupy the islands if the Arab Emirates would not obediently accede to the demands of Iran.

135. The Iranian argument always claimed that these Arab islands were strategically important to Iran, since its oil passes by these islands. Iran cannot adjust itself, apparently, to the undisputed fact that these islands have always been Arab islands and that the continuation of free passage through the Strait of Hormus is not only essential to Iran's economic life but also equally essential and vital to Kuwait,

Iraq and the other littoral States of the Gulf. The Gulf is our sole economic life-line. My Government, aware of this fact, left no stone unturned in its endeavour to work out a peaceful solution.

136. We hoped that Iran would give way to reason, heed our appeals for a peaceful way out and conform to the norms of international law and respect the Charter of the United Nations.

137. Unfortunately, intimidation and the eventual resort to force was the only answer to our appeals. Neighbourliness, old ties and mutual interests are on many occasions solid factors for solving problems peacefully. Iran discarded this fact and followed the out-dated gun-boat policy. The Prime Minister of Iran, Amir Abbas Hoveida, informed a jubilant Parliament that the Arab islands were now under the Iranian flag. He said: "The presence of some foreign elements in no way indicated that the islands were not now fully in Iranian control."

138. He meant by foreign elements the defenceless indigenous Arab population of these islands. Later it was disclosed that about 200 Arabs were evicted from the island of Greater Tunb and sent to Ras Al-Khaima. These Arabs had been living in the island for many centuries.

139. As a result of the Iranian occupation four island policemen were killed and five injured. The Iranians lost an officer, a sergeant and a soldier and another soldier was wounded.

140. The jubilation of the Iranian Parliament was indeed reminiscent of the Victorian imperial era.

141. I have revealed these facts to familiarize the Security Council with the unflagging efforts and the unflinching patience the Government of Kuwait had demonstrated to achieve a peaceful solution to this problem. I am sure that the Ambassadors of Iran and the United Kingdom are familiar with these facts and they know quite well what the Government of Kuwait had been trying to attain.

142. Britain, whose history is characterized by a chronic disease of pulling out and leaving behind explosive situations, is the country which deserves severe condemnation. Britain maintained since it signed the treaties with the Emirates early last century that these islands had been, and were always, Arab islands. All the documents about the history of these islands still lie—maybe neglected—in the drawers of Whitehall. It was bound by the treaties to defend the territorial integrity of the Emirates. It was able to observe scrupulously the provisions of these treaties which were advantageous to it, but at the same time it maintained a singular reputation of defaulting when its obligations were invoked.

143. Only last week the British House of Commons, by an overwhelming majority, approved the agreement arrived at during Sir Alec Douglas-Home's visit to Southern Rhodesia. The Home-Smith agreement perpetuated the grip of Ian Smith and his white minority on the 5 million indigenous black Africans. It is a "sell-out" marked by a white racist veto over the blacks. Britain, reluctant to meet its obliga-

tions in Southern Rhodesia, took the easiest exit and left hurriedly from an area which it considered "a pain in the neck".

144. To relieve itself from this pain, which its policy generated, it simply succumbed to Smith's *diktat*. The same policy was pursued in Palestine. Britain, unwilling to bear its responsibility in maintaining the rights of the Palestinian majority, resorted to the easiest formula. It packed up and left Palestine in chaos and disarray. The Zionists, who were armed to the teeth and worked in collusion with the British administration, took over and expelled the indigenous Palestinians.

145. Sir William Luce, the personal representative of the British Foreign Secretary—his name is written "Luce", but in the Gulf it is written "Loose" as a sign of anger towards Sir William Luce—had been engaged in extensive consultations with the Rulers of the Emirates and with the Shah of Iran about the fate of the Arab islands. He had been preaching the British view and conviction that the islands were Arab islands; but, equally, he was exerting pressure on the Rulers of Ras Al-Khaima and Sharjah to accept a compromise with Iran. While he was persistent and consistent in expressing the fact that these islands were Arab islands, he was equally persistent in urging the Rulers to abrogate the territorial integrity of their Emirates.

146. Sir William came to Kuwait many times and discussed the issue of the islands with the Foreign Minister of Kuwait. Our view was always that Britain was responsible for the protection of the territorial integrity of the Emirates, in accordance with the provisions of the treaties signed between the Emirates and Britain.

147. On 20 May 1971 Sir William Luce had his last meeting with my Foreign Minister—and I was present at that meeting, writing the minutes—in which Kuwait urged Britain to respect its commitment. During the last two years many British officials and politicians visited Kuwait and the area. Mr. Louard, the Minister of State in the Foreign Office in 1970, George Brown and Edward Heath, the present Prime Minister, all came to Kuwait and heard reiterated many times Kuwait's position that Britain was bound to honour its treaties with the Emirates so long as those treaties were not terminated.

148. On 30 November 1971 Iran occupied the Arab islands. Britain's responsibility to protect the territorial integrity of the Emirates was not honoured despite the fact that the treaties had not been terminated. *The Times* of London, on 1 December, expressed vicariously the satisfaction of the British Government with the Iranian occupation of the Arab islands. It wrote:

"From the point of view of stability in the Gulf in the future, there is some advantage in the act that Iran seized the islands while Britain was technically still responsible. The seizure is technically, therefore, not a seizure of Arab territory from Arabs."

149. *The Times* admitted that the islands were Arab islands and that Britain was responsible for protecting them. However, it went along by acknowledging the fact

that Arab territory was seized not from Arabs but from Britain. In Britain's view, as *The Times* wrote with cynicism, Sheikh Saqr, the Ruler of Ras Al-Khaima, has only himself to blame, the main reason being that he declined to yield to British pressure to compromise on the territorial integrity of his Emirate. It is not the British Government which has to be blamed and condemned but the defenceless Ruler of Ras Al-Khaima. Such arguments, needless to say, rest on flimsy premises,

150. Sheikh Saqr, the Ruler of Ras Al-Khaima, appealed for help to Mr. Julian Walker, the British political agent in the Lower Gulf, but his appeals were left in the limbo of forgetfulness.

151. The British Government, through Sir William Luce, approached us many times and sought our assistance to encourage the Rulers of the Emirates, especially Sheikh Saqr of Ras Al-Khaima, to co-operate with Sir William in finding a formula that would satisfy Iran at the expense of the territorial integrity of the Emirates. The Government of Kuwait rejected that approach.

152. The stability of the Gulf was disrupted and the security of the Emirates was encroached upon. The Iranian Government demonstrated its contemptuous disregard of Arab feelings and the legitimate Arab national interests. It is by no means a manifestation of courage, morality and coexistence to occupy small defenceless islands that belong to another party. It is not an act commensurate with normal State behaviour.

153. We demand that the Security Council call on Iran to withdraw its troops from the Arab islands immediately. What we ask is that the Iranian troops on the Arab islands should spend New Year's Eve in Teheran, enjoying the bliss of the peoples of the world and sharing with them the prayers for a New Year in which dialogue replaces force, patience supplants fanaticism, and respect supersedes disregard of international law and morality.

154. The Security Council should adopt a resolution calling on Iran to withdraw its forces from Arab territory, since the occupation of that territory not only is a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and its principles, but will also endanger the stability and peace of the Gulf. We in Kuwait never indulge in vituperation, tirades and vilification. We harbour no malice, but at the same time we cannot tolerate the malice of others. We are always flexible, but not weak; determined, but not obstinate; confident, but not arrogant.

155. The Government of Kuwait hopes that Iran will reconsider its action, taking into account the old ties, good neighbourliness and mutual benefit to the entire area.

156. Kuwait will always maintain the view that these islands are Arab islands and will not recognize any change in their status. They have always been Arab islands and will continue to be so, regardless of the Iranian occupation on Tuesday, 30 November 1961.

157. Finally, my delegation will be extremely grateful if the British representative, Sir Colin Crowe—who is indeed a

gentleman—is asked to give the Council the historical background of the status of the islands and to spell out the view which Britain has always maintained concerning the Iranian occupation. This will be a significant contribution which will enhance the chances of adopting a resolution affirming Arab rights in these islands and bringing about the immediate withdrawal of the Iranian troops in the interest of the stability and security of the area.

158. The PRESIDENT: I invite the representative of Algeria to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

159. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should like, first of all, to thank you and the members of the Council for having allowed me to participate without the right to vote in this discussion. This will permit me, in the first place, to extend to you our congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of December and to express our pleasure at seeing a representative of our African continent bearing this high responsibility. Now when events of the utmost gravity are causing turmoil in the world, the highest international body, the Security Council, can only benefit from your wisdom and far-sightedness, your great human qualities and your special and thorough knowledge of problems which concern the international community and above all the third world, which is a victim of so many threats and so much poverty.

160. Now that the situation resulting from the Indo-Pakistani conflict has acquired increasingly tragic dimensions requiring an immediate and total mobilization of our efforts to put an end to the killing, now when the Middle East crisis has reached a dangerous stage and is being discussed by the General Assembly once again, the military occupation by Iran of three islands in the Straits of Hormuz constitutes a very serious step which introduces a new element of tension in the area. No one can be blind to the fact—and Iran less than anyone else—that the islands of the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, as well as the island of Abu Musa, have long been contested by the different countries of the area. The claims of Iran over those islands have always been met by the more legitimate and just as well-founded claims of the Arab countries directly concerned.

161. I shall not deal at great length with this specific point that has already given rise to comprehensive statements by the interested parties themselves, but it is an undeniable fact that during the entire period of British domination over the area, the three islands were part of the territory that became the federation of the United Arab Emirates, which has just joined the United Nations. The question of proprietorship over the islands cannot be settled by way of a dubious agreement between Iran and the United Kingdom; it should have been discussed among all the parties with claims over these territories. It is not a question that can be settled unilaterally or by a military occupation such as Iran has recently carried out. The actions of Iran are contrary to the principles of the Charter. These acts also violate the provisions of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which was adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly [*resolution 2734 (XXV)*] and which Iran itself supported.

162. If the use of force for the settlement of international problems has been condemned unanimously, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security has specified that no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force can be recognized as legal. The haste of Iran in militarily taking over these islands that have been claimed by so many at a time when the Arab Emirates were achieving independence is part of the all-too-familiar policy of confronting the international community with a fait accompli, thus placing oneself in a position of strength for any later talks. The legitimacy of a cause that has to resort to such measures is always debatable, even worthy of suspicion, and this resort to force, which is unjustified on any grounds, should in itself cast doubt on the foundations of Iran's claims and prompt a condemnation by the Security Council.

163. But the responsibility of Iran is not the only one that has to be questioned in these events. The responsibility of Great Britain is no less significant, for the British Government was entrusted with the territory, which it should have restored in its entirety to those countries that have now achieved their independence. It was up to the United Kingdom to ensure that those territories suffered no territorial dismemberment until they were in a position themselves to defend their own interests.

164. The Iranian occupation took place before the declaration of independence of the Emirates, when the responsibility for their security still fell within the purview of the British Government. Not only could the United Kingdom under no circumstances use any part of the territory under its authority but it was duty bound as the administering Power to protect the integrity of the territory and to ensure the succession of the whole of the territory under its control for the newly independent states.

165. Regardless of the nature and complexity of the problems arising in the area, the timing and the premeditated nature of that inadmissible act betrays at the very least a disquieting greed. The world is full of many distressing problems, and the Arab world itself is today confronted with many of them and therefore cannot open up new fronts. Iran knows this full well, for Iran took an active part in the Islamic Conference of Rabat, and there has been an obvious show of interest in its attitude towards Arab concerns and even a mark of solidarity with them.

166. Therefore, it is with much sorrow that we now see being called into question by a hasty and unjustified act that whole reserve of confidence and mutual respect. It is now apparent that, taking advantage of the present plight of the Arab world, using a period when world public opinion has been very much moved by the grave events taking place at present in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent and benefiting from outside complicity, Iran, instead of the friendship of peoples which it was certainly in the interest of Iran to cultivate, has chosen a military adventure with unpredictable results. Algeria must decisively denounce these manifestations of a bellicose imperialism, and condemns in this case as elsewhere any annexationist policies.

167. The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for the very nice things he said about me.

168. The next name inscribed on the list of speakers is that of the representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to address the Council.

X 169. Mr. ISMAIL (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen): I should like to associate my delegation with the Security Council's expression of condolence to the family of Dr. Ralph Bunche.

170. Mr. President, I should like to thank you and all the members of the Security Council for allowing me to address the Council on behalf of my Government and its delegation on a matter of such vital concern. But first, Mr. President, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the office of President of the Security Council. Throughout your distinguished career, both in your own country and here at the United Nations as Permanent Representative, you have displayed outstanding leadership qualities, and I am confident that your term of office will be marked by eminence and wisdom.

171. Any discussion of the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs necessarily concerns the entire Gulf area. Indeed, our discussion would be superficial and incomplete if we did not consider these islands in their proper context, as extensions of the Arab mainland. Together with the coastal area they form one integral whole, one unit, one entity in all aspects—political, economic, social and cultural. To discuss them otherwise would be a distortion of fact. Thus, it is not a question of the seizure of three isolated islands in the Arabian Gulf, but rather of the attempted usurpation of part of the Arabian Gulf territory.

172. Within this context, we, as an international body dedicated to the preservation of peace, must ask what the Government of Iran hopes to gain by this illegal invasion; when was the decision made to invade the islands; who is responsible for such a decision; and what are the long-term goals—and, I repeat, what are the long-term goals?

173. To understand the area and the problem today, it is first necessary to understand the history of the Arabian Gulf. Portugal was the first European country to express interest in this land. In 1497, the Portuguese explorer Vasco Da Gama explored the Gulf region en route to India, with the aid of a local navigator; and in 1507 the King of Portugal sent a military expedition to the Gulf. This expedition later occupied the Hormuz Straits. The following year Muscat came under Portuguese rule. On 30 November 1521, the people of the Gulf area revolted against their colonial masters, but were defeated. That same year Portugal successfully invaded Bahrain. In 1602, the Arabian Gulf people of Muscat, Sahar, Ras Al-Khaima, Alfonse, and Al Jakerek launched a massive revolt against the Portuguese colonials and expelled them forever from their land. Subsequently, Britain and the Netherlands formed an alliance to rule the area by direct and indirect means. After 1763, however, the British established themselves as the sole Power in the Gulf area and began to bind together the ignorant and illiterate native rulers by the forced imposition of inequitable treaties and agreements. Through these documents the British attempted to disguise

their true objectives—the exploitation of the territory's natural resources, oil, and the securing of naval bases in that strategic area.

174. From these brief historical notes, it is evident that, first, an invasion of one part of this territory is but the first step in launching a larger invasion. An invasion in that part of the world has never been an isolated incident, but has affected the entire Gulf area and its people. Secondly, these three islands, Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, have never been considered separate entities in themselves, but as parts of the Arab mainland, parts of the Arabian Gulf area as a whole.

175. The British Government must assume responsibility for this most recent illegal act of aggression committed by Iran, because the United Kingdom has declared itself responsible for this area until the end of 1971. All treaties between the United Kingdom and the rulers of the area clearly grant the United Kingdom full authority in this territory.

176. Allow me to introduce to the Council a specimen of an agreement between the British puppet sheikhs of the Gulf and the United Kingdom. My colleague the representative of Iraq has already quoted parts of it; allow me to read it as a whole:

“Exclusive agreement of the Chief of Abu Dhabi with the British Government, dated 6 March 1892.

“I, Zaeed bin Khalifah, Chief of Abu Dhabi, in the presence of Lieutenant Colonel A. C. Talbot, CIE, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, do hereby solemnly bind myself and agree, on behalf of myself, my heirs and successors, to the following conditions, viz.:

“1. That I will on no account enter into any agreement or correspondence with any Power other than the British Government.

“2. That without the assent of the British Government I will not consent to the residence within my territory of the agent of any other Government.

“3. That I will on no account cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of my territory, save to the British Government.

“Dated Abu Dhabi, 6 March 1892, corresponding to 5th Shaaban, 1309 Hijri.

“Signature of Zaeed Bin Khalifah, Chief of Abu Dhabi, A. C. Talbot, Lieut. Col., resident in the Persian Gulf, Lansdowne, Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

“Ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India at Simla on the twelfth day of May 1892.

“H. M. Durand, Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department.”

At the end of the agreement appears the following:

"The agreements signed by the other Trucial Shaikhs, viz. the Chiefs of Dubai, Ajman, Shargah, Ras ul Khima, and Umm ul Gawain, the first three dated the 7th and the last two the 8th of March 1892, are identical in form."

177. Please note that this agreement has no expiration date. It is treaties like this that bound the sheikhs of the area. Even with the terms of the treaty in effect, Britain permitted the Sheikh of Shargah to cede the island of Abu Musa to Iran and the so-called ruler of Ras Al-Khaima to allow the Iranians to occupy Greater and Lesser Tunb. Britain failed to fulfil not only its legal responsibilities but also its political and social responsibilities to the area. I refer to General Assembly document A/AC.109/L.738 dated 2 September 1971⁴ concerning Oman as an example of the years of British exploitative policies in this area. This document states that as of 1971, after more than 160 years of British occupation, there are only two primary schools, no newspapers, one hospital and no roads. After 150 years of bleeding the country of its oil, draining all its resources, living like parasites on the land and its people, the British left it in a weakened and ruined condition without health facilities, without social and political development, without economic development, without transportation facilities and without educational facilities and means to begin any of those things. It is no wonder Iran finds this crippled land an easy prey.

178. The British Government oppressed and undermined the people of the Gulf in order to strengthen the power of the sheikh collaborators. In 1956 the British Government used the sheikhs' armies to destroy the national movement in Bahrain. The British did likewise in Qatar in 1957, in Oman in that same year and in Abu Dhabi in 1964. However, the British Government failed in its attempt to silence the voice of the people of the Gulf. Since 1965 the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf has waged its armed struggle against British colonialism and its agents. The Liberation Front, which has now liberated 90 per cent of the Dhofar Province, knows that the Gulf area is indeed one unit, and it will not cease its efforts until the whole area is liberated.

179. The recent influx of Iranian immigrants into the Gulf area is the result of collaboration between the sheikhs and the Iranian Government.

180. The facts of this situation prove conclusively that Britain is the Power in the Gulf area and, as such, has full knowledge and command of any and all situations existing there. It is Britain that commands and controls the political, social and economic actions of its puppet rulers. According to treaty these rulers cannot even correspond with another party without permission from the United Kingdom. Then why does the United Kingdom suddenly choose to ignore the terms of these treaties by letting the Sheikh of Shargah sign an agreement with the Iranian Government to share Abu Musa? Why does the British Government permit such a violation? Obviously, only to further its own interests and those of its allies. Thus it is Britain that is entirely responsible for the unjust, illegal and

⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 23, chap. XIII.*

immoral aggression committed by Iran against these three islands in the Gulf.

181. Iran's act of hostility and belligerence towards Greater and Lesser Tunb has no justification. Even if Iran's claim were valid, it would not be proper for it, as a Member of the United Nations, to seize the islands by force. It would not be proper for any nation to do so. Iran's seizure of these islands is a violation of the Charter and the principles of the United Nations and an affront to all Member nations who do abide by these principles.

182. The Persians invaded Bahrain in 538 B.C. and took possession of Oman and Yemen shortly afterward, conquering the Kaldanians, one of the ancestors of the Arab inhabitants of the area. The Persians remained there for about two centuries. They were followed by the Romans, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British respectively. It is this two-century occupation on which the Iranians base their claim to the islands. If this is a valid claim, then the Romans, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British would also have equal claims upon this area. If the Council accepts as valid the Iranian claim, then the map of the world should be changed to conform with periods of foreign occupation. We Arabs have existed for centuries beyond our present borders. We carried culture and Islam to many peoples, including the people of Iran. Therefore, according to Iranian logic, we should have a legitimate claim to Iranian territory.

183. *Al Hawadess*, the Lebanese weekly newspaper, published an article in its 761st issue dated 11 June 1970, written by its chief editor, Salim Allozi, a well-known journalist. The article is a debate between Mr. Allozi and one of the prominent officials of the Iranian Government. May I be permitted to read to the Council several paragraphs from this article.

184. The Iranian official stated:

"The Gulf area produces 15 million barrels of oil daily. Iran produces between 40 and 50 per cent of that amount and the rest is produced by other Gulf areas. In a few years the production will increase to 50 million barrels daily. Thus, one half of the world's consumption will come from that area. That is why we bar the door—the door to the Gulf—to any adventurist and stranger."

He continued:

"Last year our expenditure for arms was \$780 million plus \$500 million for the army. We need this money for the development of our people, but we spend it on the protection of this area. We have Phantom jets that cost \$4 million each. We spend the same amount on the training of pilots, maintenance and spare parts. We have a huge armed force, more than our Arab friends estimate. Out of a tank force of 1,900, 900 of them are the most modern Sheften tanks, equipped with electronic devices. We say proudly that we can refuel our jets in the air."

The same Iranian official further stated:

"If the British leave Oman, Iran will be able to put an end to the revolution in Dhofar in less than one week."

185. The last statement exposes the true purpose of the Iranians. They intend to interfere in the domestic affairs of Oman and destroy the revolution in another area—an area removed from Iranian territory.

186. The Iranian official continued:

“You Arabs think that when the area is exposed to a serious and dangerous situation, you can escape. You are mistaken. Our jet fighters will not let you reach the airports. We will be there before you. We have been in this area for more than 2,500 years; we will not abandon it. Sometimes we feel we are Kuwaitees more than the Kuwaiti people; Omanies more than the Omani people; and Bahrainies more than the Bahrainians.”

These are the real desires and dreams of Iran in our Arabian Gulf.

187. The Iranians have stated that they negotiated with the ruler of Al Shargah concerning Abu Musa. What is Al Shargah? It is a piece of land of 100 square miles with a population of 31,688 persons. These negotiations were not carried on between equal parties. If the Sheikh of Shargah had delayed in selling Abu Musa to Iran, Iran would have seized it by force as it did the islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb, which belong to Ras Al-Khaima, an area of 650 square miles and 24,387 people.

188. On one of his trips to Switzerland, the Shah of Iran—he always likes Switzerland, it seems to me—declared: “When the British withdraw from the Gulf area, Iran will occupy Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb by force.” That is what he said. He added: “I am not ready to put my country up for auction”.

189. In another declaration, Mr. Zahedi, former Ambassador of Iran to the United States, stated:

“We should be present in the Gulf area”—that is what Mr. Zahedi said—“and the Gulf area is not Abu Musa, Tunb, Greater or Lesser”—he means the Gulf area as a whole—“We cannot let a communist régime spread to this area as it did in southern Yemen.”

190. In conclusion, we believe firmly that the British Government is responsible for the recent brutal, arrogant and illegitimate action taken by Iran and that Iran must immediately withdraw from Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb.

191. The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen for the nice things he said about me.

192. I call on the representative of Iran.

193. Mr. AFSHAR (Iran): I would like to begin by expressing my delegation's profound grief, as well as my own, upon hearing today the sad news of the demise of Dr. Ralph Bunche, the distinguished Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.

194. Dr. Ralph Bunche was a major figure on the international scene and he will be remembered by all of us

here and throughout the world as a great artisan of peace and a foremost authority in the United Nations on the Middle East. He had many friends in Iran and I was privileged to know him personally. The United Nations, as well as the world, will sorely miss this great man.

195. We deeply mourn his death and wish to extend to Mrs. Bunche and her family our deepest condolences upon this great loss.

196. A full-scale war is reported to have been started in South Asia. Fighting in Viet-Nam and Cambodia continues unabated. In the Middle East itself, despite the present lull, the threat of armed conflict and war has escaped no one.

197. Under the circumstances, the Security Council is convened to discuss the suggestion that there is a danger in a recent action taken by the Iranian Government to put an end to the last vestiges of a dying era in the Persian Gulf area.

198. While I wish to thank you, Mr. President and members of the Council, for the invitation extended to the Iranian delegation to participate in the discussions on this item, nevertheless we cannot hide our concern over the fact that at a time when the flames of war are rapidly spreading, the valuable time of the Council is taken up not by actual and real threats to peace, but by the wanton and fanciful preoccupations of a few.

199. I have come before this august body, which is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, to state the facts about recent actions taken by my Government. I shall not tax the patience of the members of this Council by attempting to respond to baseless accusations and charges against my country. This is essentially an internal matter for Iran, but out of deference to the Security Council I am glad to be able to restate publicly the policy of the Government of Iran in this matter.

200. The present meeting of the Security Council has been called for the purpose of examining what the permanent representative of Iraq, in his letter of 3 December 1971 [S/10409], purports is “the dangerous situation in the Arabian Gulf area”.

201. This use of the expression “Arabian Gulf” warrants an immediate preliminary observation. This is not the first time that this expression has been imported into the United Nations. At first sight one might think that the name by which an international waterway is described has no more than an academic interest. But in this case this is not so. We are here dealing with a sea which, as everyone knows, has from the most ancient times been called the Persian Gulf. To call it something else is to distort fundamental truths. This misrepresentation of facts demonstrates a spirit of distortion that characterizes the speeches which we have just heard. It is symbolic of a deliberate attempt to alter historic reality and betrays a wish to attribute to the area an Arab character not justified by the facts.

202. May I now begin by stating the basis of Iranian policy in the Persian Gulf. It is based on creating conditions

for peace and security so that all the littoral States, large and small, may strive for progress and prosperity with equal rights and mutual respect for our freedom and independence.

203. We strongly believe that it is for the Persian Gulf States alone to deal with this vital international waterway. To this end we consider that the riparian States should work together in a spirit of friendship, co-operation and harmony. Any interference by outside Powers in the affairs of the Persian Gulf would undoubtedly endanger peace and stability in the area.

204. Iran entertains no expansionist ambitions. It has no designs on anyone's territory. Its land area has been richly endowed with resources. Under the wise and dynamic leadership of my august Sovereign, these are being rapidly developed in conditions of peace and stability for the benefit and prosperity of the Iranian people.

205. Iran's peace-loving policy and its strict adherence to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation cannot be challenged by anyone. If Iran's policy was other than this, it would never have acted two years ago, in the case of Bahrain, in the way it did. This was acclaimed in this very Council as a statesmanlike and enlightened act. We now enjoy the best of relations with our Bahraini brothers on the basis of equal rights and mutual respect. I can assure the Council that our policy has undergone no change since then.

206. We have proceeded in accordance with this basic policy in trying to find a peaceful settlement with regard to Abu Musa and the Tunb islands, although there is no doubt that those islands belong to Iran. Yet we now find ourselves involved in a debate in the Security Council on a question which must surely strike most of those here as being *de minimis*, minuscule to the point of embarrassment.

207. Members of the Security Council will recall that 10 years ago a comparably provocative campaign, launched by the Iraqi Government against a neighbouring country, gave rise to the same sort of episode with which the Council is now faced. In 1961, by its hostile activities against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State of Kuwait, the Government of Iraq created a tense situation in the area. At that time also it raised in the Security Council the assertion—and here I quote from the statement of the representative of Iraq at the 957th meeting of the Security Council on 2 July 1961—that Kuwait was “an integral part of . . . Basra” or Iraq [*957th meeting, para. 55*]. Now again the time of the Security Council is being wasted on the basis of an ill-founded proposition that the islands in the Persian Gulf are “Arab territories” occupied by Iran.

208. Members of the Council will not fail to take note of the fact that in their initiative the Governments of Iraq, Algeria, the Libyan Arab Republic and Southern Yemen referred to a dangerous situation arising from the Iranian occupation of three islands: Abu Musa, the Greater and the Lesser Tunbs. In so doing, they have totally disregarded the facts that the arrangements made concerning Abu Musa have already met with the approval and satisfaction of Sharjah.

209. Now I ask, can Iraq here claim to be speaking on behalf of Sharjah? What basis is there for this intervention by Iraq and those who have joined it? Can it be anything but an attempt to divert the Arab people's attention from their immediate and grave problems?

210. With regard to the Tunb islands we also sought to find a solution by negotiation. Despite our continuous efforts it failed. We had gone as far as we could and we were left with no alternative but to establish the exercise of our sovereign rights. It must not be forgotten that this was not foreign territory; it was Iranian territory. It has always been Iranian territory and, let there be no mistake about it, it will always remain Iranian territory.

211. I do not propose to enter into a detailed refutation of the Iraqi arguments regarding the claim of Ras Al-Khaima to the Tunb islands. This is not a court of law, but a body concerned with the maintenance of international peace and security. But it is right, I think, that the Council should know that the Iranian title to the islands is both long-standing and substantial. It has not been developed recently to justify the measures now taken. These are only the present reflection of a historic title which could not remain physically unasserted upon the removal from the Persian Gulf of the British presence. And can one ask for a better recognition of such a title than its repeated acknowledgement by those who had a special knowledge of and interest in such matters?

212. For more than a century, beginning in 1770, British maps marked the Tunb islands as being Persian. A mistake can be made once, perhaps, but what sort of mistake is it that can be made for 120 years?

213. In addition, in a highly authoritative encyclopaedia published as recently as 1967 to cover the events of the last 50 years, by another major Power, the Tunbs have been identified as Iranian territory. The map shows the islands having the same colour as the mainland and, in addition, they are expressly marked as being Iranian. Moreover, I should emphasize that throughout the period during which Iran has been deprived of the exercise of its sovereign rights over those islands, Iran has never ceased to protest.

214. Now, in the circumstances which have come about in the Persian Gulf, Iran cannot tolerate a situation in which part of its territory remains separated from the metropolitan area. Iran has for many years publicly and unequivocally defined its policies in this regard. It was, therefore, well known that Iran would not shirk its responsibility to safeguard its legitimate sovereign rights.

215. I cannot conclude this statement without some reference to the geographical position of the islands. With the Council's leave, I should like to distribute a map of the area to the members of the Council. As can be seen from the map, these islands form part of a group of islands, virtually constituting an archipelago, all of which have always been part of Iran. Moreover, the Greater Tunb lies only 17 miles from the Iranian mainland and the Lesser Tunb 22 miles off-shore. On the other hand, both islands lie almost 50 miles away from Ras Al-Khaima on the other side of the Persian Gulf.

216. And need I mention the thousands of miles which separate the Libyan Arab Republic from those islands? The reason I speak of the Libyan Arab Republic is simply because it was the Minister of Industry of that far-away country who, a few days ago, declared to the press in Kuwait that its Government planned to dispatch troops in order to occupy the islands. But the reason that they have failed to carry out that idea was that they were not assured of supply lines.

217. The Government of Iraq, too, has reportedly entertained similar fanciful ambitions, such as the landing of paratroops in the islands.

218. I have tried to explain recent developments in the off-shore islands of Iran. I must reaffirm once again a basic fact which transcends every other consideration, namely, that the Iranian Government will not allow a single inch of its territory to be violated. And we will not allow our sovereign rights over the islands in question to be infringed in any way.

219. We are not surprised at all at the attempt made to undermine the friendly relations that exist between Iran and our Arab brothers. It is an irresponsible attempt which does not even take into account the best interests of the Arab world, particularly at a time when the greatest degree of solidarity and unity is needed among all Moslem States.

220. History will, I am sure, confirm that through the exercise of its sovereign rights in these off-shore islands, the Iranian Government can only be regarded as having contributed to the promotion of peace and stability in the area.

221. Sir Colin CROWE (United Kingdom): I think it would be well to start by putting this matter in its proper context.

222. Members of the Council may recall the announcement made by my Foreign Secretary in the House of Commons on 1 March 1971. He stated that, following the conclusion of the review of Gulf policy which the British Government had been conducting since it came to office in June 1970, it had been decided that the existing treaties between the United Kingdom and Bahrain, Qatar and the seven Trucial States would be terminated and British forces withdrawn from the Persian Gulf by the end of 1971. That announcement confirmed the decision taken by the previous Government in January 1968.

223. From the time that the original decision was taken, and indeed for many years before that, the primary concern of the British Government has been to ensure that the stability which our presence in the area had helped to preserve for nearly 150 years would continue after our departure. As we saw it, there were two important prerequisites if this aim was to be achieved: first, that the nine States concerned, especially the States of the Trucial Coast, most of which were too small to be politically or economically viable on their own, should succeed in their efforts to come together in some form of federation or union, preferably between all nine of the protected States or, failing that, at least between the seven Trucial States;

and, secondly, that we should help to the best of our ability to promote the settlement of outstanding territorial differences in the area. The majority of those differences concerned conflicting claims by the Arab States and Iran to certain islands in the Gulf.

224. That policy was undertaken publicly and was received with universal approbation in the Arab world. It was carried out in lengthy and continuous consultations with all the Arab States. The only criticism we encountered was whether we were sincere and would see it through. The situation we are now considering is a natural consequence of that universally approved policy.

225. As members will know, the first aim of that policy has now been fully achieved. Bahrain and Qatar are now Members of our Organization. On 2 December, thanks to the perseverance of the Governments and peoples of the States concerned and their unflagging pursuit of the ideal of union, the United Arab Emirates was formally established. This morning we welcomed the new State to membership of the United Nations. Although only six of the seven Trucial States have so far joined this union, it is our hope that the seventh, Ras Al-Khaima, will do so shortly. We hope that the foundation has thus been laid for an enduring political structure within which these small States can develop and prosper, in collaboration with their neighbours on both sides of the Gulf.

226. The second aim has also been in large measure accomplished. Of the four islands in question, by far the most important was Bahrain, with a population of over 200,000. Members of the Council will recall the mission of ascertainment carried out by the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Winspeare-Guicciardi, which showed that the vast majority of the population wished their country to become a fully independent Arab State, and the endorsement of his report by the Security Council. Immediately thereafter the Shah of Iran renounced his country's claim to the island, which had long been an impediment to the improvement of Arab-Iranian relations in the area, and Bahrain was able to take its place in the family of nations.

227. The second problem island, second in size and importance though in no way comparable to Bahrain, was Abu Musa: an island administered by the Ruler of Al-Sharjah with a population of some 800, situated towards the Arab side of the Gulf. As a result of the unremitting efforts of Sir William Luce, the Special Representative whom the British Foreign Secretary appointed to pursue the search for solutions to the problems involved in our withdrawal, an agreed settlement was eventually reached between the Iranian Government and the Ruler of Sharjah on 29 November. Under this agreement, neither party has given up its claim to the island nor recognized the other's claim. It was agreed that Iranian troops should be stationed on the island, in specified areas. A detachment has already arrived on the island and was welcomed by representatives of the Sharjah Government. Arrangements were also worked out to cover oil arrangements and it was agreed that oil revenues, should oil subsequently be found on or in the vicinity of the island, would be divided equally between Sharjah and Iran. In the view of the British Government

this represents a sensible compromise agreement, which upholds the honour and dignity of both sides.

228. The two remaining islands were the Greater and the Lesser Tunb: the latter island having no inhabitants, the former a small number, about 150. Both islands lie near the Iranian shore and have long been claimed by Iran. For many years the British Government has been trying to bring about an agreed solution between Iran and the Ruler. Following the decision to withdraw our forces from the Gulf by the end of this year, these efforts were redoubled. Indeed, the speech of the representative of Kuwait is a tribute to how hard Sir William Luce tried. It is a matter of great regret to the British Government that it was not possible to reach a negotiated settlement.

229. The British Government has now terminated its defence agreements with all the protected States in the area and our forces are in the last stages of their withdrawal. As I have said, we have carried out this policy by agreement and with the approval, indeed with the encouragement, of all the States concerned, both in the area and beyond it. We hope that we have done so in a way which will give a good chance that the historical stability of the Gulf will be preserved, to the benefit not only of its people but also of all countries that have links with the littoral States surrounding this ancient sea and a concern for their well-being.

230. The ending of Britain's special position and responsibilities with the Gulf has inevitably meant the striking of a balance between the conflicting claims of neighbouring States, and the taking into account of realities. It would have been better if agreed solutions to all outstanding problems could have been reached. It was not for lack of trying that this was not possible. But I ask those who insist that every claim must be met in full to consider what would otherwise have occurred. There is a French expression: "*le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*". The over-all outcome—and I repeat once again, it was what the Arab States concerned repeatedly urged upon us—though it falls short of the ideal, represents a positive achievement and a contribution to peace. The alternative could well have been disorder and lasting animosity. I cannot see how the representative of Iraq can describe the present situation as dangerous or as a threat to peace. In the view of my Government this outcome represents a reasonable and acceptable basis for the future security of the area, which should in turn be based on co-operation between all the States of the Gulf, Arab and non-Arab. I would like to think that in time these considerations will prevail over some of the more intemperate views that have been expressed in our debate today.

231. The PRESIDENT: The next name on the list of speakers is that of the representative of the Libyan Arab Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

232. Mr. MAGHRIBI (Libyan Arab Republic): Although we have great respect for the Charter of the United Nations and its principles, we are on the point of losing faith in some of its institutions, especially the Security Council. We have reached this conclusion after many years of experience during which we have observed the work of the Council, its

deliberations and resolutions. This diminishing faith in the Security Council is one of the reasons why my statement will be brief.

233. We have witnessed that a big Power can do anything it wishes, anything it deems in accordance with its chauvinistic interests, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The small States have always been left powerless against such actions and behaviour. Furthermore, we have seen that any State in agreement with a big Power can take similar liberties without respect for the Charter or international law. The Iranian military aggression in occupying the three Arab islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb, in connivance with Great Britain, is a clear manifestation of this.

234. The Government of Great Britain has violated the provisions of the very treaties it had itself imposed upon the Sheikdoms of the Arabian Gulf decades ago. The treaties imposed occupation and colonialism. However, they also provided for the protection of the territorial integrity of those Sheikdoms and their islands. For many decades Great Britain has exploited all the provisions of those treaties to its own advantage and until now it has readily exploited the natural wealth of the Sheikdoms. On the one occasion that Great Britain was called upon to apply the protection provision, it failed miserably and intentionally, reflecting the true nature by which the world has known it for centuries: "divide and rule", trickery, treachery and butchery.

235. A glance through past centuries gives proof of this. Indeed, hardly any major conflict or turmoil the modern world has known has not been the creation of Britain or like-minded States, either directly or indirectly. And in the present instance of the Iranian aggression and occupation of the Arab islands, Britain has been faithful to its nature and tradition. Has not Great Britain done the same in Palestine, although on a larger scale?

236. Great Britain violated the treaties that it had itself imposed on the Sheikdoms of the Arabian Gulf. It violated the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

237. My Government, an Arab Government, replied in the only way understood by the imperialists—by nationalizing the oil interests of Great Britain in the Libyan Arab Republic and withdrawing our deposits from British banks. The British Petroleum Company, owned in essence by the British imperialist Government, has exploited the natural wealth of my country for many years. Our step violates no principle of the Charter or international law; it is in accordance with those principles and also with the General Assembly resolutions concerning the natural resources of States.

238. Imperialism in all its forms—old, new or emerging—does not understand the language and high principles of justice and morality. These high principles are merely a screen behind which imperialism hides its poisonous fangs. According to British action the principles of justice and morality are to be applied and respected by the small States only, for it is in the interests of the big States that the small States be Members of the United Nations, with the

psychological satisfaction of a single vote, whereas in fact they are powerless. The small States of the third world should therefore unify their efforts so that their voice—the voice of the conscience of the world—may be heard. Because the imperialists understand only the language of their own self-interest, they must be hit there where it counts instead of only complaining to the Security Council.

239. We have fulfilled but a small part of this objective, for the United Nations lends a deaf ear to the loud cries of the small and the weak while it listens attentively and obediently to the words and whispers of the big Powers.

240. My Government strongly condemns the Iranian military aggression and occupation of the Arab islands in the Arabian Gulf. It also strongly condemns the connivance of the British Government and its violation of treaty provisions and international law. The Arab position—the true Arab position—has been reflected and recorded recently on the island of Greater Tunb, where all of the small police force were killed defending it. It has also been reflected and recorded in the demonstrations of the Arab masses in their respective countries against the aggressors and their partners.

241. May I conclude by expressing the hope that the Security Council will rise to its responsibilities and to the expectations of the world community.

242. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Iraq.

243. Mr. EL-SHIBIB (Iraq): I beg the Council's patience for taking the floor again, but I cannot help but reply to some of the statements and accusations levelled at my country and my Government by the representative of Iran and to certain allusions to the situation in the Gulf area by the representative of the United Kingdom.

244. When I made my statement I said that to our knowledge Iran has never presented any documents to prove what it calls its rights to the three islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb. I said "to our knowledge", leaving an area for doubt. But the representative of Iran has put forward the argument that there are coloured maps showing these islands to be part of Iran. These coloured maps, I am sure, are of Iranian manufacture, and they remind me very much of the maps that used to be manufactured showing Bahrain as part of the yellow area of Iran. As to his famous encyclopaedia of 1967—of whose place of publication and printing no member of the Council was informed—I leave it to the intelligence of representatives to ponder and guess about the existence of such an encyclopaedia or where it originated.

245. The representative of Iran referred to Iraq's territorial ambition and desire for expansion. May I ask the members of the Council to bear with me while I beg him to answer the following: are Iraqi troops stationed anywhere but in Iraqi territory? Was it Iraqi troops which, with a great armada of arms and guns, attacked the little island of Greater Tunb and butchered the six policemen there, killing four and injuring two? Was it Iraq that was so jubilant at such a glorious, brave and valiant act? Let me read out a

little of what Radio Teheran has been telling its listeners about this episode. I am quoting from the *Summary of World Broadcasts, Part Four: The Middle East and Africa*, published daily by the monitoring service of no less a network than the British Broadcasting Corporation. This broadcast was made by Radio Teheran at 13.30 GMT on 1 December, one day after the occupation:

"Dear listener, you may recall that the Shahanshah in one of his statements said: 'The foreign forces must truly leave the Persian Gulf, which belongs to its littoral States, otherwise we shall vindicate our right by force in any way deemed appropriate.'"

246. That is not the language of a country which respects the Charter and which accepts its principles and provisions, but it is the language of a heady aggressor, confident with his force and careless of what is right and what is wrong.

247. And, of course, in the course of this broadcast Iraq and Kuwait did not escape the maligning. For representatives' amusement I must read out this passage:

"Iraq and Kuwait and other known colonialist agents are far too small to be significant enough for opposition. We shall definitely erase these dirty stains and create a stable and calm environment."

That is the sort of language which is being broadcast and fed to the Iranian people and that is the language which motivates and impels such actions.

248. The representative of Iran has been referring to friendship with the Arab people and stating that by our acts we are creating a breach in this friendship. May I ask him—and any member of the Council—whether there is one single Arab capital that has not issued a denunciation of this act of aggression? Sir Colin Crowe—and he is a very honourable man—speaks of the calm situation in the Gulf, of stability in the Gulf. What was the reaction in the Gulf as a result of Iran's aggression? Was it calm? What happened to the representative of the Ruler of Al-Sharjah, who welcomed the Iranian troops? Has he recovered, or has he not recovered yet? What happened in Abu Dhabi? What happened in Ras Al-Khaima? What happened in every part of the Gulf as a result of this aggression?

249. If we have been patient, if we have used self-restraint, that does not mean that we have forgotten or will forgo our rights. Our people will not forget.

250. It seems to me that it has become traditional policy for the British to barter Arab lands. They have done it in Palestine, and all of us have been witnessing the bitter results, the tragic results, of what they have done in that country. And now they are leaving another; and they call it a "calm and peaceful situation"; they say that their policy has achieved its purpose. If that is the purpose of British policy, I would certainly not be proud to defend it in this Council.

251. The representative of Iran has used the closeness of the islands to Iran to claim justification for its aggression and occupation of the islands. Many representatives here

are learned lawyers, international lawyers versed in international law. I would ask them: Has distance ever been a valid reason for such claims? Are the British Channel Islands French because they are closer to France than to Britain? Would anyone accept such a ridiculous reason? And what happened to the population of these islands? Why did they have to ship them to Ras Al-Khaima?

252. And why did they attack and kill six policemen? Of course, Iran has had mentors in the art of double talk. They did not say that they attacked these islands and took them by force; they said there was an agreement and the policemen had, mistakenly, not received orders to evacuate these islands.

253. A broadcast from Teheran Radio Home Service in Persian at 10.30 Greenwich Mean Time on 30 November said the following:

“After these operations the Irani Commander landed and told the inhabitants that they would be well treated. The inhabitants then prayed for the health of the Shahinshah.”

Now these are the people of the Tunb who have been forcibly removed from their homes and from Ras Al-Khaima. This is the kind of talk we are expected to listen to and accept.

254. It seems that the representative of Iran was annoyed with me for calling the Gulf the Arabian Gulf. We are not obsessed by names, but they seem to be very irritable about that. And this raises in my mind a question as to what implication we can convey to them. You have all heard the blanket claims that Iran has laid to the whole of the Gulf, its islands, its inhabitants and its land. Is this what they have in mind? I am wondering—and I think that the Council should wonder with me—if we have seen the end of the aggression, or just the beginning.

255. The representative of Iran tells the Council that this is not a court of law. But it is. There is international law; it has to be observed and respected. And the Council lives by the rule of law; it acts by the rule of law. It is only those who do not want to observe the law who tell you that it should be disregarded. And let us forget all the claims and counter-claims. Suppose Iran has a right to these islands, however significant or insignificant that right or claim is. But the Charter of the United Nations tells us something about the behaviour of States in this respect. Article 2, paragraph 4, states:

“All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”

256. Article 33 states:

“1. The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation,

arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.

“2. The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means.”

257. Has Iran brought its claims before this Council or any other body? Has the United Kingdom as the protecting Power, which reneged on them, brought the very serious case of these ill-fated islands before this body? It is a member of the Security Council and is duty bound to do so by all means.

258. We have heard the statement of the representative of the United Kingdom. I asked him two questions and he answered neither of them. The first was: were these islands Arab, and did they belong to Sharjah and Ras Al-Khaima? I do not think that we have received an answer to that question. The second question was: was not Britain duty bound to defend the territorial integrity of these islands until the final second of the expiration of British responsibility for their protection and defence, or do British treaties and British obligations have a duration of a period of minus one or two days? Is this a new precedent in respect of treaties and the carrying out of obligations of States?

259. We came here to put our complaint before you, a complaint on behalf of a small, helpless State of 25,000 inhabitants. All of you, of course, have your international relations, your obligations, your friendships, your enmities and your interests, and of course whatever judgements you make must take those into consideration. Nevertheless, as members of the Security Council, you have an obligation under the Charter to uphold its principles. If you let that fall by the wayside of political and national interests, then no one will come here again. And each State, particularly in a region so troubled and so beset by contention and difficulty as the Middle East, will learn a lesson, namely, that its rights can be gained, regained, and protected only by its own force. More trouble will be brought upon that unhappy area, which not only may expose all its inhabitants to mortal danger, but may draw the world as a whole into conflict and war.

260. The situation, let me assure you, is potentially very serious and very dangerous. We, as a country of that area, are vitally concerned. We feel that our vital interests are seriously threatened. We are aware of the seriousness of the situation. We want to apprise you of that, and we leave it to your conscience and your judgement to resolve the matter accordingly.

261. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to address the Council.

262. Mr. PACHACHI (United Arab Emirates): May I first of all associate my delegation with the members of the Security Council and the other representatives in expressing our profound grief and shock at the death of Dr. Ralph Bunche, a distinguished international civil servant who has

served this Organization with great ability and devotion for more than 25 years? I personally had the privilege of knowing Dr. Bunche for almost 20 years. I knew him when he was still the Director of the Division of Trusteeship when I represented Iraq in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly. Our association continued when he became Under-Secretary for Special Political Affairs with special responsibilities for the Middle East, and later in the Congo. Therefore, it was with great sorrow that I learnt of his passing this morning. I extend to his family and to the delegation of the United States our heartfelt condolences.

263. May I take this opportunity also to thank you, Mr. President, for your generous words of welcome at yesterday's meeting when the Security Council voted unanimously to recommend the admission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations?

264. I should also like to thank all the members of the Council, particularly those who were kind enough to make personal references to me on that occasion of the admission of our new and young State to membership of this Organization.

265. I know that members of the Council have had a trying time today. It has been a long meeting. But I feel, as the representative of the United Arab Emirates, that I must say a few words about the question before the Council which, of course, is of immediate concern to us and affects our vital interests.

266. This morning in the General Assembly [2007th plenary meeting] when I spoke on the occasion of the admission of the United Arab Emirates to membership of the United Nations, I expressed the deep regret felt by the people of the country which I have the honour to represent and its Government at the action taken by Iran in forcibly occupying the Arab islands in the Gulf. I said that we were looking forward to a relationship of friendship and co-operation with Iran, a neighbour with which we have had long historical and deep cultural and spiritual ties. The action of the Iranian Government in using force to settle a territorial dispute arising out of a claim which in our view is untenable both historically and juridically is not only contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, but is incompatible with the traditional friendship that has bound the Arab and the Iranian peoples. I also stated that the Iranian Government will realize before long that it is far more important for it to maintain good relations with its neighbours than it is to take possession of these Arab islands.

267. When the representatives of the United Arab Emirates met in Dubai on 18 July of this year to consider the future of their countries, they discussed the possibilities open to them and decided that the only way to preserve their independence and security was to federate in a strong union that would be able to play its part in safeguarding their interests and in maintaining the peace and stability in the Gulf. They agreed on 18 July 1971 on the constitution of an independent State, which they called the United Arab Emirates. It was our hope that we would be able to enter the United Nations soon after the convening of the General Assembly. That was our hope, and in fact that was the aspiration of the people of the Gulf.

268. But official statements emanating from responsible sources in the Iranian Government stated at the time that Iran not only would not recognize the Union if the dispute on the islands were not settled, but that it would do everything in its power to disrupt that Union and prevent its creation. We were therefore advised that we should delay the proclamation of our independence and postpone our application to the United Nations in the hope that a satisfactory settlement could be reached with Iran so that the Union could start its life of independent statehood in peace and harmony and good relations with its neighbour.

269. The months passed and it was not possible to reach a settlement of the Iranian claim, because Iran insisted on taking over those islands and insisted on the view that those islands were Iranian historically and that, therefore, Iranian sovereignty had to be restored to them. Their insistence was centred on the question of sovereignty. All proposals which were made to the Iranian Government regarding the possibilities of co-operation between the Arab sheikhdoms concerned and Iran in respect of these islands were rejected, and only the surrender of sovereignty of these islands to Iran was acceptable to the Iranian Government.

270. The Iranian Government was also told that perhaps the United Arab Emirates, after its emergence as an independent State, would be able to negotiate as an equal with the Iranian Government, to negotiate as one independent State with another, as two Members of the United Nations bound by the principles and purposes of the Charter, that perhaps negotiations on those bases would bear fruit and amicably settle this territorial dispute. But unfortunately the Iranian Government reiterated its view that it would not negotiate this dispute with the Government of the United Arab Emirates but that it would try to prevent the proclamation of the independence of the federation and that it would settle the island problem before the emergence to independence of the United Arab Emirates.

271. In view of this, the United Arab Emirates had to wait until almost the very last week of the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly to proclaim its independence and make its application for membership to the Organization. That having been done—unfortunately in the shadow of Iranian military occupation—it seems to me two questions must be asked. First, are these islands in fact Iranian, or are they Arab? Secondly, is Iran justified in the use of force to press its claim to these islands? The answer to the first question is that these islands, in our view, are and have always been Arab. The British Government itself has on numerous occasions stated its belief that these islands were Arab and that the Iranian claim to them was not based on any legitimate historical or legal basis.

272. The representative of Iran, who is sitting next to me, and whom I had the pleasure of meeting in London some months ago, has repeated that these islands are Iranian but has not in our view produced any convincing evidence to prove that claim. And I am sure that if Iran felt it had strong juridical and historical grounds for claiming these islands it would not have hesitated to have recourse to the International Court of Justice or perhaps to arbitration or to negotiation with an independent State after its emer-

gence, or even to the United Nations itself. Instead, they insisted on one method of solving this problem, and that is the unilateral use of force before the emergence of the United Arab Emirates.

273. The reason the action of Iran was greeted with such shock and consternation in the United Arab Emirates was that a country with whom we had had the closest historical, spiritual, economic and cultural ties, a country with which we were hoping to have the closest ties in the future, had unfortunately chosen the method of force to settle this claim, in spite of the fact that thousands of Iranian citizens have made their homes and found work in the Emirates which now make up the United Arab Emirates. And I am sure the representative of Iran would be the first to recognize and admit that the large Iranian community in these countries has always found a welcome, generous treatment and co-operation from the people of the United Arab Emirates. It was therefore a shock to see that in spite of the close ties of neighbourliness and history, Iran chose the path of force rather than that of negotiation with an independent State following its emergence.

274. It is our sincere hope that the Iranian Government will reconsider its position on these islands and will find it possible to settle this problem in a way that befits relations between neighbours and the deep spiritual and cultural ties that have bound the Arab and Iranian peoples over the centuries. And in all friendliness and frankness I tell the representative of Iran that the use of force and the inflicting of humiliation on the people of the Gulf in such an unnecessary display of military force at a time when the Members of the United Nations are striving to institute a rule of law in relations among States was contrary to the fundamental principles of the Charter but also negated the friendly relations that have always existed between our two peoples and has threatened to substitute for that historical friendship a feeling of enmity and of hostility which all of us, Iranians and Arabs alike, can ill afford to have in the Gulf at this time.

275. Mr. FARAH (Somalia): My delegation has listened carefully to the statements made in this Council this afternoon on the complaint presented by Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

276. In matters affecting claims to or rights over a territory my delegation is conscious that these are matters that go directly to the heart of a people. History is replete with conflict situations that developed because of unresolved territorial disputes. Many exist today, serving as a barrier to permanent peace between neighbouring States. Unresolved territorial disputes quite frequently give rise to intractable issues in which only a combination of goodwill, good faith and a disposition to justice can bring about a settlement satisfactory to all concerned.

277. The parties in this dispute are all concerned with the well-being of the people of the region, some directly, others

indirectly. With this common factor, and having regard to circumstance and the historic ties of friendship that bind them, it is essential that these States settle their dispute amicably so that the region may be assured of peace, security and stability.

278. In discharging its responsibilities in matters so sensitive and delicate as this matter of which we are seized, the Council must always act in strict conformity with the letter and spirit of the Charter.

279. For it to do otherwise would create unlimited difficulties and would lead to the injection of partisan considerations into the deliberations of the Council, guaranteeing thereby that chaos and not order will prevail, that strife and dissension, and not peace, will be endemic among nations.

280. Chapter VI of the Charter provides for the peaceful settlement of disputes and sets out the procedures which States should follow. Article 36 states:

"The Security Council may, at any stage of a dispute of the nature referred to in Article 33 or of a situation of like nature, recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment."

In the view of my delegation it would be precipitate at this stage to recommend any recourse under Article 36. I say this because my delegation understands that some States friendly to both the complainants and Iran have initiated contacts, at government level, in an attempt to bring both sides together so that the matter might be resolved without acrimony and with justice.

281. There is much to be said for the workings of quiet diplomacy. This procedure might well bring about results which public debates at this stage would fail to achieve. My delegation would therefore suggest that the Council defer consideration of this matter to a later date, so that sufficient time is allowed for these efforts of quiet diplomacy to work and to materialize. Naturally, should these third-party efforts fail, the Council could, at the request of the complainants, or by exercising its own discretion should the situation so demand, resume consideration of the complaint. The intervening period will enable the Council to study carefully the facts of the situation as presented to us this afternoon by the representatives.

282. The PRESIDENT: Members of the Council have heard the suggestion made by the representative of Somalia that the Council defer consideration of this matter to a later date, so that sufficient time is allowed for thorough third-party efforts to materialize.

283. As there are no objections; we will proceed accordingly.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.

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