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Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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The meeting was called or order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33 (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY:
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (interpretation from Russian):
It is undeniable that since 1970, the year of the adoption of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, important changes have occurred in international life. However, if we compare the purposes of the Declaration with the results actually achieved in the course of its implementation, we shall see that a great deal still remains to be done. In spite of the obvious difficulties, we are optimistically inclined, because the influence of the forces of peace and social progress is constantly gaining ground and the world is coming to realize that there is no sensible alternative to the policy of peaceful co-existence and political détente.

Realizing this, the States members of the Warsaw Treaty at their recent Conference in Bucharest formulated some new far-reaching proposals for furthering the process of international détente, calling a halt to the arms race and bringing about disarmament, and strengthening international peace and security. These proposals are in keeping with the vital interests and the security interests of all European States and peoples, and furthermore, are designed to bring about a general improvement in the international climate.

We have noted with profound satisfaction that the Conference of Non-Aligned States in Colombo most emphatically stressed the need for strengthening universal peace and international security. This indicates the active role of the non-aligned States in the struggle for international security, disarmament and co-operation of States on an equal footing, and demonstrates the will of these States to act in accordance with their increased international responsibility.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

In Europe, after the Security and Co-operation Conference, the turnaround in relations between States of different social systems towards peaceful co-existence has become even more apparent. The territorial and political changes which were confirmed at that conference in Europe have become an evermore decisive basis as well as the obligation assumed by States parties strictly to observe the agreed principles of international law in their relations with all States. Positive results were achieved with the successful realization of the principles, understandings and agreements in the Final Act.

A great number of meetings have taken place between statesmen of different countries. Bilateral political consultations have been extended. Between the socialist and capitalist States which took part in the Helsinki Conference, some important agreements have been concluded and certain understandings have been arrived at relating to various areas of their mutual relations and co-operation between European States. These include consular agreements, trade agreements, agreements on scientific and technological co-operation, or cultural and information exchanges. Favourable conditions have been created for a lengthy period of peace on the European Continent for the benefit of all European States.

At the same time we note that, as is stated in the Declaration of States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, of 26 November of this year:

"The forces of reaction, militarism and revanchism, which are aiming at creating conflicts, whipping up the arms race and attempting to cast doubts on the sovereignty of States, the inviolability of existing frontiers and the possibility and advisability of further détente are reviving the old manoeuvres of imperialist politics".

In the light of certain events, I should like once again in this regard to remind you of the words uttered by the Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic in the general debate at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly with regard to the borders of the German Democratic Republic:

"Security of States is and remains, first and foremost, security of their frontiers. To ensure them reliably is an equal obligation for all sides prescribed by the Final Act of Helsinki. Nobody can be discharged from this responsibility. Whoever attempts to deny the international character of this frontier, thus providing irresponsible cover for provocations at this frontier, should bear this in mind". (A/31/PV.15, P. 63-65).

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

People in Europe have not forgotten what an intolerable situation prevailed during the Cold War and how great was the daily threat of military confrontation. As a State bordering directly on the most powerful imperialist military bloc, the German Democratic Republic has a particular interest in peace and security on this continent.

In order to ensure and strengthen the positive results achieved in terms of this development, we believe it is essential to make international détente irreversible. We therefore expect from the meetings to be held at Belgrade in 1977, of States parties to the European Conference results which will impart to political détente some constructive and promising momentum. And we should also constantly bear in mind the need for implementing the Final Act adopted at Helsinki as a single whole.

Selective interpretation of the Final Act, disregard of the agreed principles for inter-State relations on the part of certain politicians, serves to maintain certain illusions and help those forces which have from the very outset opposed the Security and Co-operation Conference in Europe and were anxious to cancel out its results.

As we know, the Security and Co-operation Conference in Europe emphatically confirmed the renunciation of the use of force as the main principle in international relations.

We believe that in order to intensify and expand the process of international détente, this principle must win universal recognition. It is precisely from this standpoint that the German Democratic Republic views the importance of the proposal of the Soviet Union for the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. The conclusion of such a treaty, comprising a ban on the use of weapons, including nuclear weapons, would meet one of the most important requirements of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic views the adoption of a resolution on the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations as an important result of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

Speaking here of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, we should devote particular attention to the alarming hotbeds of international conflicts which exist.

The Middle East conflict represents a constant threat to universal peace. A just and lasting peace is necessary and can be achieved through a comprehensive political settlement, including the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied by Israel in 1967, the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including its right to the creation of its own State, the guaranteeing of the right to an independent existence of all States involved in the conflict and also the halting of the state of war between the relevant Arab States and Israel.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

We share the view of those delegations which, in the course of this session of the General Assembly, have come out firmly in favour of the earliest possible resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Great efforts are needed for the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus. We hope that the resolution on the Cyprus question adopted by an overwhelming majority will become a source of new momentum which will help to promote a settlement of the conflict.

In the Far East, as a result of the imperialist policy of force, there is a hotbed of tension on the Korean peninsula. The withdrawal of all foreign troops from South Korea and the implementation of the proposals of the Korean People's Democratic Republic would create a sound basis for peace and security in that region.

The strengthening of international security will undeniably be served by a determined struggle against all manifestations of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid. Events in the south of Africa have shown us that apartheid and racial discrimination linked with the growing militarization of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia pose a direct threat to international peace and security. The firm demand for the total international isolation of the Pretoria régime is a just one. The peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe are entitled to our unswerving and active solidarity.

The States which are supplying the racist régime in the south of Africa with military assistance and enabling that régime to spread terror in its own country and to pursue a policy of aggression beyond its frontiers, bear a particular responsibility. Military support lies not only in the direct supply of weapons, but also in the transfer of licences for the manufacture of various types of weapons. In the circumstances, we should, in general terms, view economic co-operation as encouragement for the régime because it enables the régime to use a considerable proportion of the material and human resources which it possesses for arming itself, and the growth of its armaments is the highest in the world. Therefore, it is of tremendous significance that the thirty-first session of the General Assembly has urgently called upon the imperialist countries

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

immediately to cease their economic, military and political support of the racist régimes in southern Africa.

The ensuring of peace, security and détente also requires the elimination of all forms of inequality, diktat and discrimination in international economic relations and the elimination of manifestations of neo-colonialist exploitation in any form. The German Democratic Republic supports the wish of the developing countries to achieve economic independence and unlimited sovereignty over their natural resources. For us, détente and development are not mutually exclusive alternatives, but mutually interdependent aspects of a world process which we have to fight for.

We cannot make the positive trends of international development genuinely irreversible and ensure genuine security in the world if we do not succeed in calling a halt to the arms race and advance towards disarmament. The States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, in the declaration of 26 November this year, stated that they share the concern of the peoples of the world at the fact that the arms race is continuing on a growing scale. The States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, as socialist States, are confirmed opponents of the arms race. Their desire to strengthen peace is not motivated by any passing or electoral motives. They have over and over again stated their readiness actively and constructively to co-operate with all States in solving the humanitarian problems facing mankind. Given goodwill and the constructive co-operation of all States, large and small, there are real possibilities of bringing about a reduction of stockpiles of weapons and achieving a breakthrough towards disarmament.

This is demonstrated by a number of resolutions adopted last week in this Committee on disarmament items. I have in mind, primarily, the resolution on further preparations for a world disarmament conference and the convening of a special session of the United Nations on disarmament questions. This special session could be an important step towards a world disarmament conference.

I would also like to stress our support for the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or any other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques and also the resolution on the prohibition of the development of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

I would like now, in this regard, to draw your attention to the proposals contained in the Declaration of States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty of 26 November this year, on halting the arms race. It is understandable that there should be great interest in the proposal made by the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty that, in order to eliminate the threat of nuclear war, the signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference should conclude a treaty declaring that they will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

A noteworthy proposal is the one which would extend the ban on the first use of nuclear weapons to armed forces situated beyond the frontiers of the States parties to the treaty. The conclusion of such a treaty would represent a step the importance of which would be difficult to over-estimate, a step towards elimination of the threat of war and the strengthening of international security. I would particularly like to stress the importance of such a step for the States of Central Europe which have great population density in a small territory. I think we can say that there is a genuine possibility of consolidating in treaties, in instruments of international law, these declarations of intent and will which have been repeatedly made.

There are a number of proposals by many States and groups of States and various quarters of international public opinion which are striving for genuine progress in the disarmament field. And those few who either because of their search for profit or because of blind anti-Sovietism reject anything that sounds at all like disarmament and détente or the improvement of relations among States and peoples and the releasing of vast amounts of money for development, primarily for the States of Asia, Africa and Latin America -- those few, I say, are finding themselves in a situation of increasing isolation.

The States parties to the Warsaw Treaty stress, in the Declaration I have mentioned of 26 November this year, that "The crucial issue is now to translate into practical terms the initiatives which already exist and to make progress towards binding, effective international agreements in the disarmament field."

We agree with those delegations which in the course of the general debate and in many other debates on urgent international problems have stressed the role of the United Nations in strengthening international security and the development of peaceful, mutually advantageous co-operation among States. The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, Erich Honecker at the ninth Party Congress took a very favourable view of what he called "the work of the United Nations as a forum for the struggle for international peace and security against imperialist policies of aggression and neo-colonialism".

My country will continue to support all those initiatives and aspirations which serve the cause of peaceful co-operation of States in the interests of the

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

peoples of the world. We shall continue to strive for a situation where all the means and methods provided for by the United Nations Charter are effectively used for the strengthening of international peace and security. My delegation would therefore like to see the thirty-first session of the General Assembly adopt a resolution which, on the basis of a joint analysis of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, would describe what has been achieved to this end and identify the existing obstacles, and at the same time formulate the goals which will serve the interests of the progress of détente primarily. Reason dictates that we should purposefully, stubbornly and consistently continue to erect the edifice of international security. The German Democratic Republic will spare no effort in the future, as it has spared no effort in the past, to make a constructive contribution to this cause.

Mr. UPADHYAY (Nepal): Six years ago, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security emphasizing the need for the United Nations to exert continuous efforts to implement the Declaration and since then the General Assembly has been annually reviewing the progress made in this area. Annually, the Members of the United Nations reiterate their firm support of the Declaration. This year, we discussed an item which is very closely linked with the question of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. My delegation enthusiastically took part in the debate on "Conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations" because we hailed the discussion on the item "as a further effort to strengthen the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter (A/C.1/31/PV.18, p. 49-50). We believe that the United Nations was created with the primary goal of maintaining international peace and security and we hold that the very existence and progress of mankind depends upon it. So my delegation maintains the view that the main prerequisite for implementation of the Declaration is the willingness of States to respect and uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter; to respect the sovereignty and equality of all States; to refrain from the threat or use of force against any State; and to settle disputes by peaceful means.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security adopted in 1970 by the United Nations General Assembly reiterated and elaborated the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Nepal has based its policy of international relations on strict adherence to the principles of respect for sovereignty, equality and territorial inviolability of each State; non-interference in the internal affairs; and respect for the right of all peoples to choose their own social and political systems and to determine their own course of economic development. We have been strictly adhering to the rejection of any type of outside interference in the fundamental right of a sovereign State to pursue its own goals and aspirations. For these reasons, we have always held the opinion that the United Nations Organization and its peace-keeping capabilities must be broadened and strengthened. We have always pleaded for world peace based on justice and the guarantee of security for all nations, big or small. We hold the view that international security must not be based on the so-called balance of power, but on strict compliance with the principles and purposes of the Charter. Therefore, my delegation would like to review the implementation of the Declaration on the basis of these firmly-held beliefs.

The success of the United Nations in avoiding, from time to time, the possibility of a global conflict has been clearly recognized by us. It gives us hope as well as confidence in the growing utility of this world body. However, one cannot overlook the fact that the dangers of global conflict have been warded off at the cost of numerous local conflicts and wars. In the Middle East, a State continues to defy world public opinion, to flout United Nations resolutions and to occupy the territories of other peoples. The constant violation of the United Nations Charter has kept the area smouldering. This situation may erupt at any moment and ignite a war of unimaginable dimension.

In southern Africa, the minority régime of Rhodesia and the racist régimes of South Africa and Namibia have made a mockery of the Charter of the United Nations and have shown total disregard for international opinion. A combustible situation is ripe in that part of the globe and may trigger a holocaust at any time. Today these two areas remain the major concern of the international community and much of the future of peace and the United Nations Organization depends on the dispelling of tension in these areas.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

The United Nations and the Security Council have adopted various resolutions on whose implementation the guarantee of peace and security in the area depends. However, the implementation of the resolution, though it is the duty of all States, depends primarily on the attitude and willingness of the permanent members of the Security Council. After all, the Charter has given them certain special status in order to enable them to discharge certain responsibilities. Let us ask them not only to repeat the virtues of the Charter and merits of the Declaration but to implement the resolution in good faith.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

Since 1970 there have been a few hopeful developments. The discernible relaxation of tension as a result of the de-escalation of the cold war and the initiation of détente between the two super-Powers has had its effect. Mankind can at least breathe with greater ease and hope for a better future. In the wake of détente there has been a certain amount of progress in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). Better understanding has come to prevail and various disarmament measures such as the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Treaty between the USSR and the United States have been concluded. The successful conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held at Helsinki has been a further contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security.

In south-east Asia, a bitter and protracted struggle against the forces of aggression and interference came to an end with the victory of the Vietnamese people and the people of Kampuchea. The revolution of the Portuguese people against the distatorship in their own country led them to co-operate with the glorious struggle of the African peoples who had been waging war against colonial domination. Many other former colonies have gained independence and have joined the United Nations. The Palestinian question has been given the correct perspective it deserved and the international community has given recognition to the rights of the Palestinian people. The conclusion of the Sinai agreement between Egypt and Israel was a preliminary but very important step that has contributed to a relaxation of tensions and held out hope for future negotiations. All these developments have been welcomed by us and we believe that they have contributed to an atmosphere of hope.

We, therefore, strongly urge the permanent members of the Security Council to take the necessary steps to consolidate the gains made so far. Let them not miss this opportunity to institutionalize peace and thus strengthen international security.

We strongly urge Israel to withdraw its troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967 as a first step towards satisfying the national demands of the Arab people of Palestine. We believe, at the same time, that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be established only by ensuring the right of all countries of the region to independent statehood and development. We

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

urge the early resumption of the work of the Geneva peace conference with the participation of all parties directly concerned.

It is beyond doubt that Namibia is an international territory. The persistent refusal of the racist régime of South Africa to cease its illegal occupation of Namibia is a grave action in defiance of the United Nations decision. South Africa has not complied with the Security Council decision and persists in that attitude because it is convinced of the inability of the United Nations to act as a result of the deplorable failure of some of its permanent members to co-operate with the vast majority of the members of this body. Those and only those members whose actions have made the inaction of the United Nations possible can rectify the grave challenge faced by the United Nations. We demand the immediate withdrawal of the South Africans from Namibia so that the United Nations can make the necessary provision for the enjoyment by the people of Namibia of their right to self-determination.

We urge the permanent members of the Security Council to exert pressure on the South African racist régime of apartheid to change its policy of separate development of blacks and whites and to repeal all laws based on racial discrimination.

Recent developments in Rhodesia have made it crystal clear that, if the permanent members of the Security Council genuinely wish to exert pressure on rebels, illegal occupants and delinquents, they can do so. The stern warning of a super-Power brought Smith to the conference table and the maintenance of that policy would no doubt bring Smith and his tribe to their knees. We are watching the Geneva Conference with great concern and interest.

The strengthening of international security is necessary to create stability and socio-economic progress. In fact, these factors are interdependent and interlinked. There cannot be peace as long as an overwhelming number of human beings continue to die of starvation, disease and malnutrition. That is why my delegation has been strongly urging further efforts towards general and complete disarmament. Any progress in the area of disarmament could open up new vistas of constructive economic activity. This would definitely promote further understanding and co-operation among the peoples of the world. A world more dependent on international co-operation would further guarantee security

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

among nations. Although we have welcomed all the efforts being made to achieve disarmament, we cannot but express our disappointment at the slow pace and extremely limited results of the negotiations. We therefore urge the super-Powers and the big Powers to earnestly start negotiations to attain the goal of a complete ban on nuclear testing, a reduction of armament production, the destruction of arms stockpiles and a freeze on military budgets. In our opinion, the Members of the United Nations should consider the possibility of a system of assurances by nuclear Powers to non-nuclear Powers and by big Powers to small Powers. The idea of creating zones of peace should be promoted, supported and consolidated. The Member States might, on a regional or subregional, bilateral or multilateral basis, enter into pacts of non-aggression, non-interference and non-violation of each other's territory. All such moves are necessary to achieve the goal of full implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

Draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 is a timely initiative taken by several delegations. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States is one of the most important principles, and on the implementation of that principle depend many other important concepts which help to reduce tension, establish peace and harmony and promote better co-operate between nations. My delegation welcomes the draft resolution and expresses its desire to co-sponsor it.

Mr. MUJEZINOVIC (Yugoslavia): The current session of the General Assembly is taking place under the conditions of an unstable international situation, which continues to be burdened by numerous unsolved political and economic problems and difficulties. In spite of a number of constructive initiatives and proposals, and even the achievement of some results, we must note that there has been no substantive breakthrough in regard to the solving of crucial international issues.

Although we are far from satisfied with the degree of relaxation of international tensions achieved, we should not minimize the results of the struggle of peoples and countries to build new, democratic international relations. The ever-stronger and resolute action of forces which refuse to live under degrading conditions of inequality and dependence contributes to the strengthening of prospects for peoples to live in peace, freedom and independence, to build their own systems of internal development without outside interference and pressure, to dispose freely of their natural resources, and to participate, on a footing of equality, in the consideration and solving of all important problems facing the international community today. Such an orientation of the majority of countries has rendered possible the liquidation of colonialism or bringing the process of decolonization closer to completion; the historic victories of the peoples of Asia and Africa in the struggle for independence; the successes achieved by Latin American countries in consolidating their political and economic emancipation; the emergence on the social scene of new democratic forces in Europe and, more widely, in the world; the raising and posing on a new basis of the question of the establishment of the new international economic order, etc. These positive changes have undoubtedly contributed towards opening up prospects for the democratic transformation of the world, both with regard to the strengthening of the forces of social progress and with respect to the consolidation of peace and the strengthening of international security.

We are under the impression that this session of the Assembly has confirmed the orientation towards the continuation of détente, which is a positive characteristic of the international situation. Already, at the First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade in 1961, Yugoslavia, together with other non-aligned countries, emphasized the

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

importance of overcoming the cold war and relaxing international tensions and insisted on immediate negotiations, instead of a confrontation, between the great Powers. However, détente is in its initial phase and, as it is today, it cannot fully guarantee the maintenance of peace and security. The insistence of non-aligned countries on the universalization of détente is motivated by our interest in intensifying the process of negotiation and extending it to all crucial issues in international relations, so that détente should neither be limited in scope nor confined to narrow geographic regions.

After having considered various complex problems on our agenda, we have again noted that, concurrently with the successes achieved in strengthening peace, there still exist numerous sources of threats and instability, and there can be no stable peace unless they are brought under control.

Self-determination is still being denied to many peoples under colonial domination. Interference in the internal affairs of countries is assuming ever-more dangerous forms; the practice of resorting to terrorism, especially State terrorism, and to recruiting mercenaries for suppressing the successful struggle of peoples for liberation continues; the tendency of protagonists of intervention and interference to condone such unlawful conduct is causing concern.

The Geneva Conference on the transfer of power to the majority of the population of Zimbabwe has entered a critical phase, in which the former colonial Power, in the first place, should show its readiness to take a decisive step so as to bring the initiated process to completion within a fixed period of time. We are all aware that the peoples of southern Africa will not permit any compromise detrimental to their right to complete independence. The success of the Geneva Conference would encourage us, while the negative consequences of its failure would be felt not only in southern Africa, but also more widely in the world.

A few days ago, this Committee endorsed the initiative of non-aligned countries concerning the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to consider ways and means of further strengthening the role of the world Organization in putting an end to the arms race and starting a genuine process of disarmament.

The general support of the United Nations for the initiative of non-aligned countries shows that the international community is deeply concerned at the

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

proportions that the arms race has assumed, seriously threatening peace and security. By its essence, the arms race is oriented towards maintaining the existing system of international relations under which attempts are made to impose a state of permanent subordination on the militarily weaker countries. Closely connected with this, too, is the question of the division of the world into military blocs.

International peace and security and their maintenance and promotion are the obligation of all States Members of the United Nations, and not the privilege of a small number of powerful States.

At their Fifth Summit Conference, the non-aligned countries stressed once again that peace and relaxation of international tension could not be secured through the policy of balance of power, spheres of influence, rivalry between power blocs, military alliances and the arms race. Hence our firm conviction that the world Organization should exert consistent efforts towards achieving complete and effective disarmament, if it is our wish to preserve the peace, security and prosperity of all countries and peoples.

The problems of development and building the new international economic order have become a substantive issue of present-day relations taken as a whole. The solution of these problems does not brook any postponement. It has long been clear and has been confirmed at the present session, too, through the unanimous views expressed by the developing countries, that the needs of developing countries producers of raw materials and the protection of their purchasing power are non-negotiable issues. The absence of progress at the Paris Conference, the postponement of the implementation of the consensus achieved at the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in connexion with the implementation of the integral programme for solving the problems of raw materials and foreign debts of developing countries are causing serious concern. If this situation continues, it is going to have extremely serious consequences for international peace and security. By postponing positive solutions all the time, those countries causing the situation are assuming the responsibility for all the ensuing consequences, including the unavoidable strengthening of the tendency towards confrontation.

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

Next year, Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia, will be the site of an important international gathering. A conference of participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe will be held for the purpose of reviewing the results achieved in the implementation of the agreements reached at Helsinki.

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was a gathering of sovereign European States, the United States of America and Canada, and not an interbloc forum; consequently, its basic aim was to promote intra-European co-operation without pressures and interference. The Final Act of the Conference provided an elaborate basis for the development of co-operation and relations in the economic, technical, humanitarian and other fields, in keeping with the Declaration of Principles, as a framework governing these relations. In the course of preparations for the Helsinki Conference, Yugoslavia insisted on the view that Europe cannot seek solutions to vital problems involving its security and prosperity by locking itself up within its own borders. In this connexion, it urged that the non-European Mediterranean countries should be allowed to submit their views on issues concerning the security of Europe and the Mediterranean and their interdependence. This amounted, in fact, to opening the Conference to broader international issues. This attitude towards the Mediterranean was also confirmed in the Final Act, which is important, especially if we bear in mind that the Mediterranean happens to be one of the most sensitive zones in the modern world. Without the solution of the crisis in the Middle East and the stabilization of the situation in the eastern Mediterranean, Europe -- and not only Europe -- cannot feel safe. These are also the reasons why the Fifth Summit Conference of non-aligned countries in Colombo urged a just and durable solution for the Middle East crisis and the problem of Cyprus, and the conversion of the Mediterranean into a zone of peace.

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

Regardless of the successes achieved by our Organization in safeguarding and strengthening international peace and security, the United Nations is still faced with the resistance of those who want to preserve the existing relations of inequality and to circumvent and even ignore the world Organization and who, at the same time, abuse the right of veto with a view to blocking even those actions that enjoy the widest support of Member States. By strengthening the role of the world Organization, by strictly implementing its decisions and by solving all the important problems of the international community through the United Nations peace in the world can be ensured and international security strengthened. The active participation of non-aligned countries in the work of the thirty-first regular session of the General Assembly, their realistic and constructive approach to problems and their contribution to the consideration of all items of the agenda have confirmed, once again, that -- with the active participation of all countries -- it is possible to find more just and lasting solutions to important international problems.

The Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Colombo has upheld non-alignment as an independent factor in international relations, whose principal objective is to strive for changing relations in the world through co-operation with all interested countries. Consequently, the non-aligned countries will continue to be actively involved in constructive co-operation through the United Nations, because only a universal relaxation of tensions can bring about radical changes in the international situation and free the international community from aggression, the use of force and any other form of foreign domination.

Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): The discussion on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security is one of the most important items of business of our Committee. This is because problems touching on international security are of importance to all countries, great or small, developed or developing; international security is vital to the existence and development of States. Furthermore, it is important because the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security is one of the most

(Mr. Todorov, Bulgaria)

important documents adopted by the United Nations. The Declaration is not merely a further expression of the determination of States Members of the United Nations to base their mutual relations on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations but is also a kind of programme of action to achieve the principal goal of the United Nations -- namely, the strengthening of international peace and security. The Declaration indicates the areas of activity in which States must focus their efforts in order to achieve peaceful settlement of problems which, in one way or another, create tensions and sow insecurity in international relations.

Six years have elapsed since the adoption of the Declaration -- only a brief period in the perspective of history. However, we can clearly state that these years have been characterized by an intensive development in international relations, in which there have appeared qualitatively new elements.

As a result of the joint efforts of the progressive and democratic forces, profound changes conducive to peace and progress have emerged. Détente has established itself as a dominant trend in international relations. Confrontation between States has given way to international co-operation, while the principles of the Charter of the United Nations are becoming increasingly realized. Peace was established in Indo-China, enabling the heroic people of Viet Nam to unify their country. The peoples' struggle caused the colonial régime of Portugal to collapse and enabled the peoples of Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde and others to obtain their independence. Everywhere, militarist circles are being confronted with ever-increasing difficulties in their efforts to use armed force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

The Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has achieved remarkable results, whose importance exceeds the framework of the old continent. The successful conclusion of that Conference showed the broad scope for co-operation among States if goodwill exists.

Significant results have also been achieved in the field of disarmament, both bilaterally --- primarily between the USSR and the United States -- and multilaterally.

In the course of these last six years, serious efforts have been undertaken to restructure international economic relations on an equitable and

(Mr. Todorov, Bulgaria)

non-discriminatory basis. Much has also been done to bring about the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

These are the major changes that have occurred in international relations and that have created conditions increasingly conducive to the solution of the international problems facing States, particularly the developing States. We believe that the adoption of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and the annual review of its implementation have also contributed substantially towards these changes.

We must, however, note with regret that the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security has encountered obstacles created by certain forces that are acting in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In order to achieve their goals, they seize every opportunity to resort to means that are inadmissible both under the Charter of the United Nations and under international law, such as the use or threat of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, interference in the internal affairs of other States and so on. These forces oppose détente in international relations and try to revive the spirit of the cold war, creating tensions in one part or another of the world. Thus, the existence of conflicts in the Middle East, Cyprus, Korea and southern Africa poses a serious threat to the security of the countries of the regions concerned, as well as to international peace itself. The current session of the General Assembly, like preceding ones, has demonstrated the deep concern of the great majority of States Members of the United Nations over the threat to world peace involved in a postponement of a settlement of these conflicts.

(Mr. Todorov, Bulgaria)

My Government's position on the situation in the Middle East, in Cyprus, in Korea and in southern Africa was made known in the course of the General Assembly's consideration of the matter as well as when the Security Council took up the items on the agenda. Here we will only stress the nefarious influence exercised by the very existence of these conflicts on the process of the consolidation of international security. We should also like to stress the dangers that these conflicts represent to world peace in the atomic era. At the same time we wish to draw attention to the very specific responsibility borne, in the eyes of their own people and humanity in general, by those who stand in the way of a peaceful settlement to existing conflicts.

The declaration quite justifiably stresses the tight link that exists between disarmament and the strengthening of international security. The interdependence of these two aspects was also stressed in the course of the general debate of the present session and in the very recent discussion we held in our Committee on disarmament. The concept and the idea that international security cannot be strengthened during the arms race at a time when weapons are accumulated in different parts of the world was confirmed in the statements of the majority of the delegations speaking and in the resolutions adopted by the Committee. International security is far more than a mere absence of war. It presumes the non-existence of tensions in international relations, the presence of goodwill and the intention to replace fear by hope. Everybody agrees in recognizing that the adoption of effective measures that might stop the arms race and lead to disarmament will have extremely beneficial effects on the strengthening of international security and the security of each State. This is the deep conviction of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and its people. This is why my Government participates actively, in the Organization and outside it, in all efforts made by States to achieve practical measures to obtain effective disarmament leading to general and complete disarmament under strict international control. Without endeavouring to minimize what has already been done in this field we must stress that only the first steps have been taken in that direction, much is yet to be done in order to overcome the resistance of those forces whose interests lie in a continuation of the arms race and the proliferation of weaponry. The questions of disarmament are increasingly of concern to Governments

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and they are the subject of intense negotiations. We are convinced that common sense and a realistic approach will be applied, that an end will be put to the arms race, and that effective measures will be taken so as to achieve true disarmament.

The present session has seen confirmed the determination of Members of the United Nations to devote themselves to achieving progress in this field. The priorities have been set and we would hope that in 1977 in the course of the disarmament negotiations we will witness an applied realism and political will that will greatly contribute to the achievement of true progress in the preparation and adoption of co-ordinated measures in the field of disarmament. An initiative of immense importance was recently adopted by the members of the Warsaw Treaty when they proposed to all States that signed the final act of the Conference on European Security and Co-operation to conclude a treaty which would bind States not to be the first to resort to nuclear weapons against another State, whether on land, on the sea or in outer space. This initiative is again a manifestation of the constant concern of the socialist countries to prevent a nuclear war and consolidate peace and security in the world. This surely is proof of the goodwill of the socialist countries to make a tangible contribution to overcome the present stalemate and achieve the adoption of effective measures to strengthen trust among States. The conclusion of such a treaty would play an overwhelming role in the strengthening of international peace and security.

A very close tie exists between the strengthening of international security and the expansion of international security in political, economic, scientific, technical, social, humanitarian and other fields. International co-operation would lead to mutual understanding and would strengthen trust among peoples, both of which are prerequisite conditions for the strengthening of international security. The reconstruction of international relations, and particularly of economic relations, on democratic principles is also of significant importance in the strengthening of international security. The aims of continuing to exploit the natural resources of Asia, Africa and Latin America and, under new conditions, to safeguard the privileges obtained during the colonial period are both sources of so much tension and so many conflicts in international relations. It is for these reasons that we uphold the efforts made by the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America to

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create a new world economic order based on the principles of equality, of the sovereignty of States and non-interference in domestic affairs as well as on non-discrimination and mutual benefit. Political decolonization, however, must be followed closely by economic decolonization. We are convinced that this would contribute significantly to the strengthening of international security.

It is with good reason that the Declaration has given particular attention to regional, subregional and bilateral measures adopted in accordance with the terms of the Charter of the United Nations to strengthen international security. The positive influence on the over-all development of international relations flowing from the results of the Helsinki Conference was and continues to be felt, and stands as an example of the preponderant role that regional-type measures can play in the ultimate strengthening of international peace and security. The Conference created conditions fostering ultimate development of multilateral and bilateral co-operation among participating States in all fields of human activity as well as the adoption of measures whose implementation would provide an atmosphere favourable to the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. This good example of the European countries could well be followed by countries in the rest of the world.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria took an active part in the European Conference on Security and Co-operation and at present is implementing in all good faith the provisions of the Final Act of Helsinki, including the declaration of principles which are to guide States in their mutual relations. My country has widened and deepened its relations with all countries of Europe on the basis of the provisions of the Final Act of Helsinki. Our particular contribution to the implementation of the commitments assumed in Helsinki can be found in the efforts that we have made in order to encourage the development of co-operation among the countries of the Balkan region. The People's Republic of Bulgaria has devoted its efforts -- and will continue unflaggingly to do so -- to the strengthening of respect for the principles of peaceful coexistence and the cementing of friendly relations among all the countries of our region, regardless of what their social system may be. These efforts on the part of Bulgaria and the goodwill expressed

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by other Balkan States will contribute positively to the creation of an atmosphere of understanding, of co-operation, and of good-neighbourliness and to the strengthening of trust among our people.

The policies and practices of colonialism, racism and of apartheid that are so dear to the illegal régimes of Salisbury and Pretoria by their very essence represent another source of tension in international relations and so many threats to international peace and security.

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As the discussion in the United Nations during the last few months on the situation in southern Africa has proved, these régimes are far from being willing to renounce the policies they have hitherto applied. The discussion has also brought out that these régimes do enjoy the support of certain members of NATO. Indeed, a number of facts attest to the intensified efforts of these countries to search for ways and means, within the United Nations and outside it, to preserve their régimes in Southern Rhodesia and in southern Africa in order to retain the southern part of this continent as the basis for their practices and actions against the peoples of Africa. We share the view that so long as the reactionary racists of the white minority in Southern Rhodesia and southern Africa have not been eliminated and independence not granted to Namibia, there will be no peace in the African continent and in the world. In these circumstances and in the light of the intensified efforts to rescue the régimes of Southern Rhodesia and southern Africa, the consolidation of the unity of the African people and the redoubling of the vigilance against these efforts on the part of the forces of imperialism become most important. This was stressed in the course of the present session by the overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations, who reaffirmed their total solidarity with the combatants against colonialism, racism and apartheid.

Analysing the results of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security we can only fully support the conclusion drawn at the Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Colombo held last August, and I quote:

"The underlying causes of international tensions, which imperilled world peace and security, was attributable mainly to the forces of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, Zionism, racism and other forms of alien domination which endeavour to hinder the political and economic emancipation of nations and to maintain the existing pattern of unjust and unequal relationships in the international community, thereby denying peoples their inalienable right to freedom and self-determination" (document A/31/197, pp. 17-18, para. 24).

On the other hand, the analysis shows that the forces of progress and the peace-loving nations and peoples are multiplying their efforts, closing their ranks and strengthening their determination to bar the way to warlike adventurers,

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to restructure international relations on a democratic basis, to wipe out, for ever, the vestiges of colonialism, racism and apartheid and to develop harmonious co operation in all aspects among nations.

All this will strengthen international security and establish a lasting peace all over the world. International security is not an abstract notion: it can only be strengthened if concrete measures are adopted by all States regardless of the size of their territory, the degree of their development or the nature of their social régimes.

The role of the United Nations and, more particularly, that of the Security Council in these efforts is an important one. Our Organization should stand on the side of the democratic and progressive forces. Its assistance will contribute to strengthening the authority of the Organization as such ... one that was created to maintain world peace and to strengthen international security.

Mr. SIBANI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): Since the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth historic session held in 1970 adopted, among other resolutions, resolution 2734 (XXV) relating to the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, the international community has reposed great hope in the creation of a new world and international relations based on justice and principles ... the purpose for which the United Nations was created ... because this Declaration is an important milestone on the road towards the creation of a new world and the improvement of relations among peoples and nations for the strengthening of its security, well-being and prosperity. This important milestone was laid when, in its two special sessions, the sixth and seventh, held in 1974 and 1975, the General Assembly decided on a new international economic order and prepared a series of suitable arrangements and measures to attain this goal. The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, in terms of its very objectives, is addressed, above all, to the Security Council and its permanent members as the parties concerned in the application of the principles of this Declaration. This is also true because of the high priority in international affairs reserved for the Security Council, together with other international bodies, and in the light of the prerogatives and privileges conferred on its permanent members under the Charter. However, the world-wide nature of this

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Declaration means that all the Members of this international Organization are parties concerned, because international security, whether it be political, military, economic, social or humanitarian, is indivisible security, which is global in nature and consequently must be of concern to the whole international community throughout the world. The proof of this is that resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in the field of disarmament, security or the elimination of colonialism, aggression or development are closely linked. In the view of my delegation, it could not be otherwise, because these are measures which have to be applied successively. In laying stress on the role of the Security Council and that of its permanent members above all, and on the role of the international community, we are properly underlying the importance of the task entrusted to the Security Council with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

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We are also aware of the special privileges of the permanent members of the Security Council; and until the Security Council discharges its heavy responsibilities better, and until the permanent members of the Security Council use the right of veto with integrity and objectivity, in order to maintain international peace and security, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security will, in our view remain, a pious hope which belongs to the category of the numerous appeals made by the General Assembly in its various resolutions, resolutions which have become dead letters because they have not been accorded the necessary positive and objective reception by the Security Council.

The international community has over the past few years seen a regrettable situation which demonstrates the abuse of these exceptional privileges by one particular country -- in this case the United States -- which has attempted to obstruct a number of resolutions, even the most balanced and moderate ones. These resolutions had been worked out as a result of intensive contacts and consultations regarding certain questions which the Security Council had before it in order to strengthen international peace and security and eliminate tension in the world, and also in order to eliminate colonialism, racism, apartheid, aggression, occupation and ensure the participation of all countries in the world in the work of the United Nations. The reason for the United States' obstruction is that the representative of the United States, by exercising the right of veto, was attempting to strengthen racist and aggressive régimes, deliberately forgetting, or perhaps unwittingly forgetting, the exceptional responsibility of his country with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In the view of my delegation, if the Security Council and its members remain unable to carry out this exceptional responsibility, or are hesitant about it, that is the implementing of the Charter and its principles relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, and until the Security Council and its members give the necessary support to the peoples and Territories struggling to recover their sovereignty and independence, to recover their territories, to put an end to aggression, economic domination, military occupation, which are important elements for the maintenance of peace and security, we shall be in the near future witnessing a violent reaction on the part of the majority of the members of the General Assembly and we shall witness a confrontation between the General Assembly

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and the Security Council, which will give rise to an amendment of the Charter, so that the constitution and composition of the Security Council will be changed, and the privileges and prerogatives conferred on the permanent members will be revised, or the General Assembly will adopt resolutions which will promote world peace and security so as effectively to strengthen peace and security throughout the world.

It might be a good idea in this regard to indicate that the number of the Members of the General Assembly reached 145 this year, and this in itself justifies such a fundamental amendment of the Charter, so as to give an opportunity to all members of the international community to contribute to the strengthening of peace and security on a broader basis.

The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, as we know, is closely linked with present-day political trends in the present international situation. Détente within the framework of relations among great Powers is continuing. So if, at the present time, the United States and the Soviet Union are contributing to this process, because of their high level of technological progress and because of their power in terms of conventional nuclear weapons, my country believes that the other permanent members of the Security Council, which themselves have achieved a high level of technology and are powerful in terms of conventional weapons, should be able to contribute in their turn to the strengthening of international peace and security.

In spite of this, the partial results, which we expect now or in the near future, allow us to hope that the tensions in international relations will be limited, and we shall finally succeed in putting an end to aggression or occupation, and in ensuring the security of the peoples of the world in a world living according to the principles of justice, equality and in prosperity.

It is extremely important to realize that new States have achieved independence and today are exercising their sovereignty after so many years of fighting. These countries today occupy their proper place within the community of nations and have become Members of this Organization. A source of hope for us is the fact that the militant nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America are strengthening today their policy of exercising their inalienable and sacred rights, like the peoples of Angola and Rhodesia, and the majority of the Africans in southern Africa, and also the people of Palestine, where racist, Zionist and colonialist régimes have pursued a policy of domination, occupation and repression.

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The countries of the third world have achieved significant success because of their co-operation with the United Nations and the socialist, progressive, peace-loving countries in the elimination of colonialism in all its forms, old and new. So there are no more than just a few territories, the number of which does not exceed five or so -- like Rhodesia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa -- that still remain to be liberated. Thanks to this encouraging phenomenon the number of Members of the United Nations this year has reached 145, whereas in 1945 the membership was only 51.

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Without any doubt the world situation has improved if we compare it with what it was during the cold war, which lasted from the forties to the fifties. But this improvement is a relative one and theoretical, if political progress does not match economic and social progress. The creation of a new world economic order is an important task for the strengthening of international peace and security. How can peace and security be brought about if the majority of peoples in the world are victims of exploitation and deprived of the basic elements of real development? Political democracy cannot perform its task if it is not buttressed by economic and social democracy of a genuine kind. It is recognized that the present economic order is unjust and inequitable, and economic relations deriving from the present order cannot lead to the least improvement in social, economic and financial conditions of three quarters of the people of the world, forming what is known as the developing countries, which constitute, as Mr. Amerasinghe said in his statement to the General Assembly on 21 September last, an "alliance for ... advancement". (A/31/PV.1, p. 21)

If this injustice continues, the present gulf between the developed and developing countries will increase. This is a dangerous phenomenon, which should be opposed by the international community in the course of the examination of ways and means of achieving the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of World Security. Since we are speaking of a relative improvement and political achievements which the international community has been able to bring about because of the co-operation of its members, we should mention that peace will continue to be threatened if the problems and crises facing the world are not resolved.

As long as the Governments of South Africa and Rhodesia remain in the hands of the white minority, as long as the Government of South Africa pursues a policy of apartheid against the Africans, who represent the majority of the country, and prevent the independence of Namibia, as long as foreign troops remain in South Korea and as long as Korea remains ununited, and while there is no peace agreement to replace the armistice signed in 1953, peace will continue to be endangered. It will also be threatened until the Middle East crisis and the Palestine question have been resolved.

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The statement of my delegation on 6 October in the General Assembly read as follows:

"While we warmly welcome the Helsinki Document and the constructive spirit enshrined in it, we still believe that any talk about détente and European security remains inadequate if the causes of tension in the Middle East are not eliminated." (A/31/PV.19, p. 28)

In our approach to the consideration of this item we took as our point of departure the recommendations of the developing countries and the resolutions adopted by the non-aligned countries, of which my country is one and has been since 1954. The non-aligned countries held their conference in Colombo in August to prepare their strategy and lay down the fundamental principles for the strengthening of world security, whether political or economic. Within this context we should point out that the strengthening and consolidation of international security can only be brought about if the principles of the Charter are implemented and if colonialism, occupation, aggression, racism and zionism are eliminated in all their forms. All these resolutions, all these principles, are to be found in the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and in General Assembly resolution 3389 (XXX) adopted at the thirtieth session by a majority of 109 votes with no opposition and 19 abstentions.

The delegation of my country is among those which supported this resolution within the non-aligned group and the socialist countries and peace-loving countries. The absence of opposition to this resolution engendered considerable hope with regard to the establishment of the peace and security we all look forward to. But the heaviest responsibility in this regard is that of the members of the Security Council and countries which are Members of our Organization, as I said at the beginning of my statement.

The report of the Secretary-General and the annex which was submitted to the General Assembly set forth the opinions and recommendations of countries with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. All these views and all these proposals underline the need for establishing a new world economic order based on justice and equity. All these documents brought out the close link between world peace and security and the elimination of tension and conflict in the Middle East, which are very dangerous

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internationally. Many statesmen throughout the world and foreign ministers referred to this in their statements in the General Assembly at the beginning of this session. I would mention in particular the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union who, on 28 September, said:

"There can be no doubt that so long as the occupation by Israel of Arab lands continues, so long as the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine are trampled upon, the Middle East will continue time and again to be in a state of fever." (A/31/PV.7, p. 76).

The international community must eliminate the tension in the Middle East by preparing the way for the strengthening of a just and lasting peace in our Arab region. The path to such a peace has been outlined by the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, resolutions familiar to all, which are supported by almost all the international community. These are resolutions based on the three following principles. First, total withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and pursuant to the United Nations Charter, its resolutions and the norms of international laws. Second, the recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine so that this people can exercise the rights of which it has been deprived for so long, including its right to self-determination, the right of return to its country and to recover its goods and to create a Palestinian State in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions.

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The implementation of these principles will lead to a just and equitable peace in the Arab region and will eliminate sources of conflict. At that time, international guarantees within the framework of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, guarantees from the permanent members of the Security Council and the United Nations, will ensure respect by all parties for their commitments, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and these very guarantees. At that time, the peoples of the region may witness an enhancement of their economic and social well-being and, in this way, future generations will no longer be exposed to the war and destruction which have occurred in this part of the world.

In order to attain these goals, we should not give up hope. We should act vigorously, we should hold out our hands to the peace-loving countries so that we can achieve a just and lasting peace, which will be one of the elements for strengthening peace and security not only in our area, not only in Europe, but also throughout the world.

Mr. BART-WILLIAMS (Sierra Leone): Since the adoption of resolution 2734 (XXV) by the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security has come to assume growing importance in view of the nature and scope of the issues which confront our Organization from year to year. Each year, contrary to the purpose and spirit of the Declaration, we are faced with ever-increasing problems which at times change in character but for which we cannot find workable solutions. Each year we see very meagre results, despite our strenuous efforts, in the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration.

The spirit and purpose behind the Declaration was the reinforcement of the United Nations Charter, especially in areas where the latter's provisions appear to be weak in the matter of implementation. We believe that the Declaration was not intended to replace the Charter but to complement it and that any weaknesses encountered during the implementation of the former can be traced back to the latter. The Charter has placed the primary responsibility for peace and security on the Security Council, which at times finds itself powerless to enforce its own decisions on one State or another, especially when national interests conflict

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with such decisions. On the other hand, important decisions of the Council are prevented or hampered by the use of the veto. This makes the need for a review of the Charter extremely urgent. My Foreign Minister, in his statement to the General Assembly during this year's general debate, expressed appreciation for the work already done in this regard by the Special Committee on the Charter and expressed the following hope:

"In particular, my Government wishes to see the voting system in the Security Council reviewed, with particular attention being paid to the power of the veto, which has so often been used to the detriment of the interests of the third world." (A/31/PV.12, pp. 53-55)

However, along with the call for a revision of the Charter there should also be a call for a change in the attitudes of States so that the interests of the Organization, as embodied in the Charter, are given priority over national concerns.

My delegation is pleased to note a few positive changes which during the past year have taken place in international relations and have created favourable conditions for the solution of some international problems. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held at Helsinki has made a worth-while contribution to the efforts to achieve international peace and security. Other important international conferences during the period have made their own contribution. Yet these should not make us oblivious to the many unresolved problems in various areas that seriously threaten international peace and security. Détente has not yet reduced the conflicts and the struggle for influence, nor has it eliminated the hotbeds of tension in many areas of the world where there still exist aggression, foreign occupation, interference, racial discrimination, apartheid and economic exploitation.

It is in the field of disarmament that the blatant disregard for the provisions of the Declaration is most evident. This Committee has already spent much time dealing with disarmament problems, and there is no need to bore its members by repeating the issues. Suffice it to say that disarmament is a major link in the chain of international peace and security and that the strengthening of this chain is determined by the rate of progress towards general and complete disarmament. Lasting peace and security cannot be achieved with the continuous

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build-up of nuclear arsenals and the increasing production of conventional and other deadly weapons of mass destruction. It is true that, while all States have a part to play in bringing about disarmament, the main responsibility rests on the shoulders of the major Powers that control the production and distribution of these weapons. This, therefore, places a greater responsibility on these Powers in regard to the cause of international peace and security.

An obvious threat to international peace and security is posed by the situation in southern Africa, where the South African Government has acquired such an accumulation of arms and other deadly weapons that to talk of disarmament in that part of the world appears to be an impossible dream. The black majority population both in South Africa and in the occupied Territory of Namibia continues to live under constant threat, fear and oppression. South Africa continues to ignore, with impunity, all the United Nations decisions as well as world opinion and criticisms of its policy. This criminal policy of apartheid, which has been condemned in almost every quarter, continues to deny the black population their fundamental human rights and freedoms. This intolerable situation is expected to continue so long as certain Powers condone South Africa and continue to trade with it and to supply it with arms. So far, their condemnation of apartheid has been mere lip service designed to camouflage their arms and trade transactions. An equally serious threat to peace is the continued existence of the illegal Smith régime in Rhodesia, which is still denying fundamental rights to the indigenous black majority. At this stage, it is only necessary to say that my Government is pledged to support the people of Zimbabwe in their just struggle, the successful end of which will certainly bring some peace in that area.

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My delegation is encouraged to observe the progress made in the area of decolonization which for a considerable period has been the central preoccupation of the United Nations. During the past year, more newly independent territories have joined our ranks and now that the tensions in these areas have lessened considerably and peace has restored, we can expect these States to make their own practical contribution towards the strengthening of international peace and security.

We note, however, that the process of decolonization is far from complete and a great deal of work will have to be done to ensure the freedom and independence of other States still under foreign domination.

It is now universally accepted that the present world economic system, being outdated and practically unworkable, is in need of change in order to take account of the political, economic and social realities of the world today. We continue to strive towards the realization of the new economic world order, an established concept which has already utilized much time in the deliberations of our Organization. The success or failure of our efforts should be dictated by the willingness of States to co-operate in order to transform our economic structures. Today States have become so interdependent that such co-operation is considered essential and if successful will bring obvious benefits to all alike. Failure could spell disaster, not necessarily for the developing countries alone, but for the others as well. It is therefore important that, though such a concept may seem complex to follow, a major step should be the willingness and determination of all States to give their full co-operation and arrive at a workable solution, especially in areas like commodities and commodity agreements and the operation of the international monetary system. There is therefore no doubt that the concept and principles of this new economic world order can contribute enormously to the strengthening of peace and security among all States.

It should be recognized that a favourable political climate is a prerequisite for the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. Today, our present political system based on the Charter has obviously proved unsatisfactory in international relations and the need for a new international order is quite evident. The Secretary-General has rightly held

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that the new system must be based on collective responsibility to achieve any reasonable success. Indeed international co-operation on an equal basis does not interfere with or detract from the national rights and influence of large States nor does it tend to increase the prestige of small States. A new order based on collective responsibility will give better opportunities for the successful implementation of the Charter as well as other important United Nations decisions. Our Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security should be more successfully implemented under such favourable conditions.

My Government has always lent its support and co-operation in the implementation of the Declaration and will continue to do so. As a small State we believe that the maintenance of peace and security rests squarely on the strict adherence to the provisions and principles embodied in the Declaration. We also believe that the United Nations still has a vital role to play to protect small States and guarantee their national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Above all, we believe that the United Nations should ensure that small States take their rightful place and play their role in this world body equally and effectively.

The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security is vital to the maintenance of peace in all areas of the world. It is therefore necessary that all States, large or small, rich or poor, developed or developing, should adhere strictly to its provisions and principles. It is only in this way that its implementation can be successful and meaningful.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to make one or two announcements. The first is that Botswana, Burundi and Rwanda have become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41. The second concerns the organization of work. As representatives are aware, we adopted a decision at our 53rd meeting, last Monday, to finish the general discussion today and we shall do so this afternoon and proceed tomorrow to take decisions on draft resolutions pertaining to item 33 of the agenda presently under consideration.

I hope to be able to finish the work of the Committee at tomorrow morning's meeting, perhaps with some extension. This is important, particularly in view

(The Chairman)

of the fact that tomorrow afternoon, as representatives may have noticed from today's Journal, the plenary Assembly will consider reports of the First Committee on a number of items relating to disarmament, so that a number of representatives from this Committee will have to be present in the plenary Assembly during that time. I think that, with the co-operation of representatives, we shall be able to finish the work of this Committee at tomorrow morning's meeting, and I would appeal to all delegations to be here punctually at 10.30 a.m. I am making this appeal at this time so that everybody may arrange his plans accordingly and so that we may avoid both unnecessary delay in starting the meeting and also the practice, unfortunately too common, that a number of representatives come after a decision or a vote has been taken and say that had they been present they would have voted in such and such a way. This will not be necessary if everybody is in his place in time. So I do count on representatives' kind co-operation.

I now call on the representative of Israel, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. EILAN (Israel): It could have been assumed that the dictates of elementary good taste would have prevented the representative of Syria from intervening in the year 1976 in the debate on an item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". However, he went further than this. Yesterday it was announced that Syria joined the list of sponsors of resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 dealing with non-interference in the internal affairs of States. I am not going to be drawn into the usual sterile debate about the Middle Eastern dispute, nor am I going to repeat Israel's answers to Arab charges which are levelled against us in every Committee, no matter what the item under discussion, with a compulsive monotony of ritualistic incantations.

(Mr. Eilan, Israel)

I should, however, like to say that if one is to interpret the meaning of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 in terms of the recent record of one of its co-sponsors, namely Syria, this resolution could be deemed to condone the invasion of neighbouring countries, the slaughtering of defenceless civilians, the creation of refugee problems all in the name of strengthening of international security. As I have indicated, one could have expected Syria to have been one Arab country that would have considered it prudent to remain silent this year in debates such as this. However, by co-sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 while Beirut is still being cleared of corpses and while Syrian tanks are still entrenched in the capital of Lebanon, Syria has set another record of ghoulish hypocrisy as yet unsurpassed even in the annals of this Organization. As far as the remark with reference to the question of the Palestinian people made by the representative of Syria is concerned, I would say that he banked heavily on the failure of collective memory of this Committee. Perhaps the time has come to refresh his and the Committee's memory of events in the lifetime of all of us. Between 1949 and 1967, that is, for 18 years, the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip were not in Israel's but in Arab hands. How is it, one might well ask, that in the course of nearly two decades, these Arab States have failed to allow the Palestinians to set up a state of their own? How is it that the Arab demand for the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and a State of their own arose only when these territories came under Israel's control? Could it be that the Palestinians in the year 1966 were less worthy of self-determination than they were a year later, in the year 1967? The answer is, of course, simple enough. The demand by Arab States for the right of Palestinians to self-determination is not an expression of their genuine concern for the political aspirations of the Palestinians but an expression of their quest for the destruction of Israel. As for the Palestinians, to the Arab States and especially to Syria, they are a mere pawn to be moved or violently removed, as events both in recent and the last six years have so clearly shown. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel stated at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly: "... it is self-evident that genuine peace in the Middle East must include a just and constructive solution for the Palestine Arab problem" (A/PV.2368, p. 26). These

(Mr. Eilan, Israel)

Careful words carry more promise for the political future of the Palestinians than do dozens of inflammatory orations by the representatives of certain Arab countries who in fact seek territorial self-aggrandizement under the guise of defending the cause of the Palestinians.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Israel and I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. I understand he wishes to exercise his right of reply.

Mr. SIBAHI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): A few moments ago the representative of Israel raised the question of Syria's presence in Lebanon. That was the main reason for which he took the floor. He established a link between the fact that Syria's becoming co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41 that provides for non-interference in the domestic affairs of States and he has spoken of the presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon and close to the end of his statement he cited the Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country speaking at the General Assembly and his country's desire to see peace established in the Middle East. In this clarification, which I consider necessary here rather than the right of reply, I would clarify that what the representative of Israel has said does not deserve a reply from me; but some clarification is required in order to keep the views of the members of the Committee clear on this matter. The clarification I should like to make is the following: the presence of Syrian forces in the neighbourly country of Lebanon is not a simple presence, it is a national Arab duty that was imposed on Syria because of the historic social, economic and even political relations that exist between Lebanon and my own country. May I add that that presence does indeed fit in within the framework of the maintenance of peace in the Arab world, where the sad events of Lebanon occurred only because we have tried to do away with any obstacles to peace in our region and see peace established there. Any reference to Lebanon or to the national duties fulfilled by Syria in its presence in Lebanon were mentioned by the representative of Israel as though this were a noxious situation or hysteria. In the General Assembly, Mr. Herzog spoke also of the presence of Syria in Lebanon.

(Mr. Sibahi, Syrian Arab Republic)

In the Special Political Committee, Mr. Doron spoke of the presence of Syria in Lebanon. In the Security Council, and in this same Committee, and in many other Committees and bodies of the General Assembly, the representatives of Israel speak of the presence of Syria in Lebanon, they speak of the civil war which has been taking place in Lebanon for 18 months, they speak of the dead, they speak of the wounded and the hurt caused by these sad events. But they do not speak of the circumstances that forced Syria to perform its duties and its obligations as an Arab nation to put a stop to the flowing of blood in the region. If the representative of Israel had wanted to find the true reason why Syria and other Arab countries have joined forces and sent them to Lebanon, forces that were put together by the Arab League, he could have found it and the answer would not be of the nature of that given by the representative of Israel. He would have found the answer given by the representatives of Lebanon in November and December of this year. If the representatives of Israel wish to find the answers, I would explain the following: the fact that Syria is carrying out its national duties in Lebanon must be linked to our efforts to put an end to the bloodshed in Lebanon and to guarantee the territorial integrity and the political independence of Lebanon. Syria's presence in Lebanon is only intended to stymie the imperialist plots that tend and try to prolong the crisis in the Middle East and stand in the way of any just and lasting solution to the problem. We know that the situation of neither war nor peace that exists in the Arab region today is contrary to true peace and the true desire to see peace restored there.

(Mr. Sibahi, Syria)

Those of my colleagues who followed the general debate in the General Assembly on the question of the Middle East will, no doubt, have understood the glimpses of hope that surround the situation in the Middle East because of the improvement of the situation in Lebanon. I would even say that a new Ministry has been set up in Lebanon since the end of the civil war and, if I am not mistaken, the new Prime Minister who was nominated is Salim-el-Hoss, and anyone who wishes to can refer to the press releases to ascertain what is intended in Lebanon to re-establish peace.

Syria's presence in Lebanon is in keeping with the Arab Defence Pact and the agreement on economic and social assistance of 13 April 1965 which was signed under the aegis of the Arab League and a treaty to which Syria, Lebanon and other friendly States have adhered.

In conclusion I will say that Syria's presence in Lebanon is due to the official request of Lebanon, issued by President Suleiman Franjieh when he was still President and Mr. Elias Sarkis, the President today, repeated that request, and in the interim the Prime Minister of Lebanon, the Head of the National Assembly of Lebanon, issued the same appeal. Representatives of Israel and other representatives can read the statement of the ex-President of Lebanon to the President of the Arab League of 7 June of last year, and they will then see the appreciation shown of Syria's presence and its effect on the Lebanon crisis.

We speak of peace when we consider this item on the agenda and the representative of Israel proudly cites his Minister of Foreign Affairs in his statement to the General Assembly, when he put an end to any hope of peace in the Arab region.

But as far as my own delegation is concerned, we are convinced that Syria's presence in Lebanon is only one aspect of the final goal that we are all seeking, namely, the elimination of this new source of tension in the Middle East. Doing so, we shall then have opened the way to a just and lasting solution to the problem in the Middle East. We shall then have succeeded in doing away with the source of tension, so that peace may be re-established not only in the Middle East, but all over the world.

In conclusion, may I say that the statement of the representative of Israel and the quotation he made, mentioning what his Minister for Foreign Affairs had

(Mr. Sibahi, Syria)

said regarding peace when speaking in the General Assembly, is only just so much more propaganda, so many more efforts to deceive and induce us into error. These efforts will fail, because on what does the representative of Israel base himself when speaking of peace? Does he base himself on the aggression and on the occupation of Arab territories, on the policies of annexation, on the creation of Israeli settlements in occupied soil? Does he base himself on the desire of expansionism at the expense of the Palestinian peoples whose lands have been taken? Does he base himself on the policies of Kissinger's partial solutions, though facts have proved that these are not valid, since the whole situation has been frozen for two years?

If the representative of Israel is serious in his statement, if Israel does truly wish to take the initiative of a political nature leading to peace which is what we would desire, then Israel should immediately withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and immediately recognize the legitimate right of the Arab peoples of Palestine. Let Israel fulfil these two basic conditions that were mentioned by so many of our colleagues who have spoken today and those who spoke yesterday, and probably those we will hear tomorrow. Let Israel then carry out those two conditions and then speak to us of peace, and then speak to us of strengthening it in the Arab world where the tension persists.

Before concluding, may I assure once again that we are in favour of peace, that we shall struggle for peace, but for a just and lasting peace, for a peace that will be maintained, a peace that will not be shattered suddenly. It is certainly not being shattered by Syria becoming a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.41. May I hasten to add here that my delegation is also a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.42 which deals with the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity of making this clarification and replying to the futile statements of the representative of Israel and I reserve my right to speak in exercise of my right of reply if he should speak again.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.