

SINGAPORE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

This section was introduced for the first time in the December 1977 issue of the Review (1977) 19 Mal. L.R. 401. Its objective is to reproduce materials and information that will illustrate Singapore's attitude to, and approaches on, questions of international law and international organisations. As far as possible, primary materials will be reproduced but where unavailable, and the topics are important, secondary materials including relevant extracts from newspaper reports will be reproduced. The materials will be presented under the following headings:

- I. Policy Statements
- II. Legislation *
- III. Judicial Decisions *
- IV. Treaties (other than Asean Instruments)
- V. Asean Treaties, Declarations and other Instruments
- VI. Singapore in the United Nations and other International Organisations and Conferences

Owing to limitations of space, the materials reproduced in the section will be selective. As the materials are compiled from the Law Library and other sources, it should be stressed that any texts contained herein are not to be regarded as officially supplied to the Review.

I. POLICY STATEMENTS

- (a) *Straits of Malacca: Joint Press Release on the Joint Hydrographic Survey Results for the Establishment and Marking of a 23-Metre Depth Navigable Channel at the One Fathom Bank Area in the Straits of Malacca (Singapore Government Press Release MC/APR/35/79 (Communications))*

The Governments of the Republic of Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and the Republic of Singapore reached an understanding in July 1978 to jointly conduct a hydrographic survey for the establishment and marking of a 23-metre depth navigable channel at the One Fathom Bank Area for the eastbound route of the Traffic Separation Scheme in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. The establishment and marking of such a channel is one of the conditions stipulated by the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) before the Traffic Separation Scheme adopted at the 10th Assembly of IMCO in November 1977, can enter into force.

* For this issue, there are no materials under this heading.

A technical meeting was held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 18th and 19th August 1978 to formulate the Memorandum of Procedure for the execution of the survey.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Procedure a joint team consisting of members from the four countries conducted the hydrographic survey using the Indonesian survey vessel, KRI BURUJU-LASAD. The survey lasted 37 days from 27th September to 2nd November 1978.

A joint team consisting of members from the four countries met in Jakarta from 8th November to 7th December 1978 to process the data obtained from the joint hydrographic survey. The findings from the survey were examined by a meeting of officials from the four countries in Jakarta from 20th to 22nd December 1978. The meeting confirmed the existence of a 23-metre depth navigable channel at the One Fathom Bank Area and also recommended the installation of the necessary aids to navigation to mark the channel. The meeting further agreed to inform IMCO of the results of the Joint Survey, as well as of the conclusions of this meeting.

- (b) *Namibia: Joint Communique issued at Singapore by the Government of Singapore and the Mission of Consultation of the United Nations Council for Namibia (Singapore Government Press Release MC/FEB/34/79 (Foreign Affairs))*

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Singapore, a mission of consultation of the United Nations Council for Namibia headed by Mr. Winston Tubman, Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations, and comprising Representatives of China, Indonesia, Romania and Zambia visited Singapore from 21 to 24 February 1979.

During the visit, the Mission of the Council paid a courtesy call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, who was accompanied by his Senior Minister of State Mr. Rahim Ishak, and discussed the situation in Southern Africa and Namibia in particular.

The Mission also met with senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The leader of the Mission explained the objectives of the Mission, and informed the Singapore side of the current position at the UN on the question of Namibia.

The Government of Singapore reiterated the importance of putting an end to the illegal occupation of Namibia. The Government also reaffirmed its full support of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter as the basis for solving the Namibian problem.

The Mission of the Council and the Government of Singapore strongly condemned the policies of colonialism, racism and apartheid. The Government of Singapore reiterated to the Mission of the Council its continued opposition to the racist and apartheid policies of South Africa in Namibia and expressed the hope that the people of Namibia would be able to exercise their right to self-determination and independence in the very near future.

The Mission of the Council and the Government of Singapore emphasized that the continued illegal occupation of Namibia and the suppression of the fundamental rights of its people by the racist government of South Africa in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the decisions and resolutions of the United Nations as well as the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, constitute a threat to international peace and security. In this connection, they demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of South Africa from Namibia.

The Mission and the Government of Singapore examined the efforts being made to implement United Nations resolutions on the question of Namibia including Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978 to inter alia, ensure the independence of Namibia through free and fair elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations. The Government of Singapore reaffirmed its full support for any measures taken by the United Nations, in pursuance of the above resolution to speedily achieve the independence of Namibia. In this regard, they condemned all manoeuvres such as the illegal elections organised by South Africa in Namibia held on 4 December 1978 designed to impose a puppet regime, and called upon all States to be vigilant and to deny recognition to any puppet groups or regime installed by South Africa in Namibia contrary to Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978.

The Government of Singapore also reiterated its full sympathy and support for the legitimate struggle of the people of Namibia for freedom and independence under the leadership of SWAPO, the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia.

The Government of Singapore assured the Mission of its continuing support for the Council for Namibia as the legal administering authority for the territory until independence.

The Mission and the Government of Singapore expressed support for the decision of the Thirty-third session of the General Assembly to meet, at an appropriate time, in a resumed session in order to consider developments relative to the question of Namibia and to take effective measures in conformity with the Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions to end South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia.

They also welcomed the proclamation by the General Assembly in resolution 33/182C of 1979 as the year of Solidarity with the people of Namibia.

During their stay in Singapore, the Mission visited the Jurong Town Corporation, the Port of Singapore Authority and the National Trades Union Congress where they were briefed by senior officials on the functions and policies of these organisations.

The Mission of the Council for Namibia thanked the Government and the people of Singapore for the warm welcome extended to it and the programme of visits and discussions arranged for it and expressed its gratitude for the firm and consistent position taken by the Government of Singapore on the question of decolonisation, with particular reference to Namibia.

- (c) *Australian International Civil Aviation Policy: Letter from Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore to Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia (Singapore Government Press Release MC/JAN/31/78 (Foreign Affairs))*

The following is a text of letter on the Australian International Civil Aviation Policy from Mr. S. Rajaratnam, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, to Mr. Andrew Peacock, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia.

The letter was handed to Mr. Peacock on the evening of January 27, 1979, during his stopover in Singapore.

January 27, 1979.

His Excellency, Mr. Andrew S. Peacock,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Department of Foreign Affairs,
Australia.

Dear Andrew,

As you have been closely associated with Asean and have enjoyed cordial relations with your Asean counterparts I am taking the liberty of following up the letter I wrote you on December 8.

Your reply of December 20 tempered somewhat my initial misgivings about Australia's new International Civil Aviation Policy (ICAP). You stated there that the "spirit" in which the Australian civil aviation experts would approach the Asean-Canberra talks of January 8-11 would be one of considering "carefully and sympathetically your reactions and those of other civil aviation partners."

You also assured me that "this meeting should serve to remove any possible misunderstandings about the intentions underlying Australia's new policy."

I know that you have worked sincerely to forge close links between Asean and Australia because like us you realise that these strong links are essential for the survival of both our countries in an uncertain and turbulent Asia.

This being so I hope you will forgive me if I state my concern in respect of future Asean-Australian relations with a directness and frankness not normal in a letter from one friendly Foreign Minister to another.

Nevertheless, I am forced to do so because I sincerely believe that unless Australia's ICAP, as elaborated by your officials, is substantially modified Asean-Australian relations could, after February 1, take a course which neither of us would want it to do but in which both of us would have to persist.

It would appear, after the elaborations made by your officials at the Canberra meeting, that we had indeed misunderstood Australia's new civil aviation policy. Its objectives extends to something more than merely providing cheap fares for air travellers. We in Asean

have welcomed the introduction of cheap fares and in a free economy open competition is the only effective mechanism to ensure the cheapest fare possible.

However, the insistence by Australian officials on the incompatible mechanism of duopoly to achieve this puzzled us at first. But now we know why. It is not at all incompatible if the real objective is to knock out airlines of developing countries, such as those of Asean, from the field of *international* civil aviation. Every move that Australia has made to force ICAP down our throats, the absence of the little courtesies accorded in hard bargaining between friendly countries and the invitation to Asean to "negotiate" after first declaring that ICAP would nevertheless be put into effect by February 1 are tactics normally employed when the other side has to be brought to its knees and concede defeat.

These are serious allegations to make and I shall justify them.

But before I do so it is necessary for me to clear one major misunderstanding a number of Australian officials and political leaders appear to have in regard to the strength of Asean feeling and solidarity on this matter. I know that individual Asean partners have been approached with attractive inducements to break ranks. Assessments have been circulated by way of gossip that when it comes to the crunch Asean solidarity would crumble.

You have been dealing with Asean long enough to know that soft language does not necessarily mean weak spines, as others have discovered in respect of Asean. The Asean Economic Ministers and now the Asean Foreign Ministers have made known their firm views in a nice way but some of your colleagues who have not known Asean leaders as intimately as you, might have mistaken politeness for weakness. It is quite natural for one to give a friend the benefit of the doubt. This doubt, however, has now been confirmed. It is that ICAP is a cover to knock Asean airlines out of the field of *international* civil aviation.

Today Asean airlines have been made the targets of Australia's *international* Civil Aviation Policy. If Australia succeeds in this with the active or tacit support of other developed countries, the airlines of other Third World countries who manifest some capacity to compete on equal basis with wealthier airlines must be the next targets.

It would be a very serious error to think that this "gang up" of the rich countries against developing countries would remain unnoticed for long or that the crippling consequences of Australia's ICAP would not be felt by those who may now miss the real intentions of ICAP spearheaded by Australia.

In respect of the ICAP your officials including Minister Nixon claimed that this would encourage greater flow of traffic into Asean countries. According to our estimates, the opposite would be the case. First, this is evidenced by the Australian Government's proposal to out down SIA's capacity by 40 per cent. We do not see how this tallies with the claim that ICAP will increase flow of tourists to this region.

Secondly, your ICAP has already had adverse impact on us. Future bookings in SIA on the Sydney/London route has dropped by 30 per cent. This again does not tally with Minister Nixon's claim. Minister Nixon's point-to-point policy extends not only to cheap fares but to normal fares as well including first class and economy class passengers. In other words, even first class and economy passengers will be carried only by BA and QANTAS point-to-point. This is an additional blow to us.

Thirdly, in your effort to push Asean airlines out of the field of international civil aviation, you are even pressing the Germans and the Dutch to make point-to-point arrangements with you in regard to flights to Sydney. This means that we are even deprived of the pool of passenger traffic in Europe which we now tap.

I hope that in the interest of our future relations you will impress upon your colleagues that the representations that have been made by the Asean Economic Ministers and more recently by the Asean Foreign Ministers would not be lightly dismissed.

Yours sincerely,

S. RAJARATNAM

IV. TREATIES (OTHER THAN ASEAN INSTRUMENTS)

- (a) *Press Statement, 12 January 1979, on Avoidance of Double Taxation Convention Between Singapore and Italy (Singapore Government Press Release MC/JAN/14/79 (Finance))*

The Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation between the Government of the Republic of Singapore and the Government of the Republic of Italy has now been ratified. The Convention was signed in January, 1977. On ratification, it shall have effect retrospectively in Singapore in respect of income for the year 1975 or accounting year ending not later than 31st December, 1975 and assessable for the year of assessment commencing on or after 1st January, 1976 and subsequent years of assessment, and in Italy in respect of income assessable for the taxable period commencing on or after 1st January, 1975 and subsequent taxable periods.

The Convention provides for tax sparing credit in respect of dividends, interest and royalties. Tax on dividends, interest or royalties which has been exempted or reduced in either Singapore or Italy in accordance with domestic law shall be deemed to have been paid, for the purposes of granting tax credit by the other country, at an amount not exceeding ten per cent of the gross amount of dividends, twelve and a half per cent of the gross amount of interest or fifteen per cent of the gross amount of royalties. The provisions therefore ensure that where an Italian taxpayer receives the concession of exemption or reduction of Singapore tax in respect of dividends, interest or royalties, he will be given the above tax sparing credit in Italy. This means that the tax concessions given by Singapore as incentives will not be nullified. Singapore will similarly give tax sparing credit where the tax on dividends, interest or royalties has been exempted or reduced in Italy.

The Convention also provides for the limitation of tax at source to twelve and a half per cent on interest, fifteen per cent on industrial royalties and twenty per cent on royalties in respect of cinematograph films.

The conclusion of the Convention, besides relieving double taxation, will further promote the flow of investment and technical know-how between the two countries.

V. ASEAN TREATIES, DECLARATIONS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

- (a) *Joint Statement of the Special Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers, Bangkok, 12-13 January 1979 (Singapore Government Press Release, 13 January 1979)*

Joint Statement of the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, Bangkok, January 12-13 1979:

Determined to demonstrate the solidarity and cohesiveness of ASEAN in the face of the current threat to peace and stability in the Southeast Asian region and recalling the Vietnamese pledge to the ASEAN member countries to scrupulously respect each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to co-operate in the maintenance and strengthening of peace and stability in the region, the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN member countries met in Bangkok on January 12-13 1979 and agreed on the following:

- (1) The ASEAN Foreign Ministers reaffirmed the statement issued in Jakarta on 9 January 1979 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia as Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee on the escalation of the armed conflict between Vietnam and Kampuchea.
 - (2) The ASEAN Foreign Ministers strongly deplored the armed intervention against the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kampuchea.
 - (3) The ASEAN Foreign Ministers affirmed the right of the Kampuchea people to determine their future by themselves free from interference or influence from outside powers in the exercise of their right of self-determination.
 - (4) Towards this end, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers called for the immediate and total withdrawal of the foreign forces from Kampuchea territory.
 - (5) The ASEAN Foreign Ministers welcomed the decision of the United Nations Security Council to consider without delay the situation in Indochina, and strongly urged the Council to take the necessary and appropriate measures to restore peace, security and stability in the area.
- (b) *Joint Press Communique issued at the Special Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Transportation and Communications, 2-5 April 1979, Singapore (Singapore Government Press Release MC/APR/5/79 (Communications))*

The Special Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Transportation and Communications (COTAC) was held in Singapore from 2-5 April

1979. The Meeting was attended by delegates from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Mr. Mohd. Noor Hassan, Chairman of the COTAC and Leader of the Malaysian Delegation chaired the Meeting.

The Meeting was guided by the common stand adopted at the 7th ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur from 12-13 December 1978 and the Special ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting on 22 February 1979.

As a follow-up to implement the decisions of the ASEAN-Australian Ministers at their Jakarta meeting from 20-21 March 1979, the Meeting collated statistical information and conducted in-depth studies to support ASEAN's proposals for submission to Australia on the following:—

- (1) That ASEAN airlines' participation of the end-to-end traffic between Australia-UK/Europe would not jeopardise the Australian ICAP low fare scheme.
- (2) That ASEAN's proposal of a stopover fare on the Australia-UK/Europe route would not jeopardise the low fare scheme.
- (3) ASEAN-Australia sectorial fares as well as ASEAN's proposals for intra ASEAN add-on fares.

The studies indicated that ASEAN's proposals on the above three key areas would not jeopardise ICAP's low fare scheme.

ASEAN agreed with Australia's request to hold the next ASEAN-Australia Senior Officials Meeting from 2 May 1979. This Meeting will be held in Kuala Lumpur and will be preceded by an ASEAN Senior Officials Preparatory Meeting on 30 April 1979 also in Kuala Lumpur.

The Meeting was conducted in the traditional spirit of ASEAN cordiality and solidarity.

VI. SINGAPORE IN THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND CONFERENCES

- (a) *UN Security Council: Statement of Ambassador T.T.B. Koh, Permanent Representative of Singapore, 13 January 1979*

Mr. President, it is fortunate for the Security Council to have a man of your high intellect and great diplomatic skills as its President this month.

Mr. President, my delegation has asked to speak to the Council on the complaint of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea against Vietnam for two reasons. *First*, because the escalation of the armed conflict between Democratic Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam poses a particular threat to the peace, stability and security of the region of Southeast Asia of which Singapore is a part. *Second*, because all countries should be concerned when a stronger and more powerful country resorts to force in its international relations and intervenes in the internal affairs of a smaller and weaker country,

in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations. This concern is particularly felt by small and militarily weak countries such as my own.

Mr. President, my Government strictly upholds the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. If the conflict in Democratic Kampuchea were a conflict of an exclusively internal character, we would not have asked to speak to the Council. The fact of the matter is that the conflict in Democratic Kampuchea is not a conflict of an exclusively internal character. The evidence is irrefutable that the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has sent its armed forces across an international border into Democratic Kampuchea and has intervened in the internal affairs of that country.

Mr. President, it has been said by others that the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, led by Pol Pot, has treated its people in a barbarious fashion. Whether that accusation is true or false is not the issue before the Security Council. We hold the view that the Government of Democratic Kampuchea is accountable to the people of Democratic Kampuchea. No other country has a right to topple the Government of Democratic Kampuchea however badly that Government may have treated its people. To hold to the contrary principle is to concede the right of a foreign government to intervene and overthrow the government of another country.

It is the sovereign right of the people of Democratic Kampuchea to choose and to change its government. No other country has the right to do so. It is the sovereign right of the people of Democratic Kampuchea to choose its own political, social and economic system. No other country has the right to do so. In short, it is for the Kampuchean people and the Kampuchean people alone to determine their own destiny and Vietnam must respect their right to do so.

Mr. President, less than three months ago, the Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Mr. Pham Van Dong, visited my country as well as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

In his discussions with the leaders of the ASEAN countries, the Prime Minister of Vietnam said that Vietnam will respect the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and that Vietnam will not subvert the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of other countries in Southeast Asia. The visits of the Vietnamese Prime Minister and the statements he made in the five ASEAN capitals were positive contributions to the promotion of friendly cooperation between Vietnam and the other countries of Southeast Asia.

The leaders of Singapore said at the time of Prime Minister Pham Van Dong's visit that we expect Vietnam's deeds to match its words. We regret to say that after Vietnam's armed intervention in the internal affairs of Democratic Kampuchea, my country as well as other countries in Southeast Asia will have serious doubts about the credibility of Vietnam's words and about its intentions. Vietnam can, to some extent, re-establish its credibility by immediately and unconditionally withdrawing its forces from Democratic Kampuchea and by respecting the sovereign right of the people of Democratic Kampuchea to determine their future by themselves free from foreign interference.

Mr. President, the Security Council will no doubt wish to consider what appropriate action it should take in this matter. In the view of my delegation any resolution of the Security Council should contain the following four elements. *First*, it should deplore the armed intervention by Vietnam in the internal affairs of Democratic Kampuchea thus violating its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. *Second*, it should reaffirm the sovereign right of the people of Democratic Kampuchea to determine their future by themselves free from interference or influence from outside powers. *Third*, it should call for the immediate and total withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from the territory of Democratic Kampuchea. *Fourth*, it should request the Secretary-General or send a UN mission to verify the withdrawal of foreign forces from Democratic Kampuchea.

- (b) *UN Security Council: Statement of Ambassador T.T.B. Koh, Permanent Representative of Singapore, 26 February 1979 (Singapore Government Press Release MC/FEB/39/79 (Foreign Affairs))*

The peace, security and stability of the region of South-East Asia, indeed, of the world, is being threatened by the armed conflicts between Democratic Kampuchea and Vietnam and between China and Vietnam. The two wars have already inflicted death and destruction and untold suffering on the civilian populations of the countries involved. Unless arrested, these wars will not only escalate in intensity but also threaten to involve other powers in the conflict. It is for these reasons that my Government has given its support to efforts to convene an urgent meeting of the Security Council.

Mr. President, there are two armed conflicts taking place concurrently. The first is the armed conflict taking place in the territory of Democratic Kampuchea between Vietnamese forces and forces loyal to the Government of Democratic Kampuchea. The second is the armed conflict taking place in the territory of Vietnam between Chinese and Vietnamese forces. The two conflicts are, in our view, related. The conflict between China and Vietnam is, at least in part, a product of Vietnam's armed intervention against and occupation of Democratic Kampuchea.

Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to state the principles which govern our approach. First, I wish to recall that all member states of the United Nations are under an obligation to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force. Second, they are under an obligation to settle their disputes by peaceful means. Third, they are obliged to respect the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. The wars in Kampuchea and Vietnam have arisen because the parties concerned have violated some or all of these principles.

Mr. President, I turn first to the armed conflict taking place in the northern part of Vietnam between Chinese and Vietnamese forces. The armed conflict began on February 17, 1979. In a statement issued by the Xinhua News Agency (S/13094) on the same day, the Chinese Government explained that its military operation against Vietnam was a counter-attack against numerous incidents of armed provocations and the killing of Chinese frontier guards and inhabitants by the

Vietnamese. The Chinese Government stated that it did not want a single inch of Vietnamese territory and that after counter-attacking the Vietnamese, the Chinese forces will withdraw to the Chinese side of the border. In his note of February 17, 1979 (S/13095), addressed to the President of the Security Council, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Mr. Nguyen Duy Trinh, accused the Chinese of waging a war of aggression against Vietnam.

Mr. President, it is difficult to ascertain the truth of the allegations and counter-allegations by China and Vietnam concerning various incidents along their border. Whatever the truth of the matter and the merits of the case may be, they do not, in the view of my Government, justify the action of the Government of the People's Republic of China in launching a military attack against Vietnam. If the Vietnamese have perpetrated the border incursions and have killed Chinese frontier guards and other inhabitants, as alleged by China, the proper thing would have been for China to bring its complaint to the Security Council. China should not have taken the law into its own hands. If countries, especially these which are big and militarily powerful, were to take the law into their own hands and to mete out punishment to other nations, then the world is not safe for small and militarily weak countries. For these reasons, we cannot support the Chinese action which violates the principles of international law and of the United Nations Charter. In line with the Asean statement of February 20, 1979 (S/13106), we call for an immediate cessation of hostilities. We call upon China to withdraw its forces from the territory of Vietnam. We call upon the Governments of China and Vietnam to enter into negotiations in order to settle their differences peacefully. In this respect, we commend the offer of his good offices by our Secretary-General. Dr. Kurt Waldheim, to the Governments of China and Vietnam. Finally, we appeal to powers outside the region to exercise restraint and not to escalate the present conflict.

I shall turn next to examine the situation in Democratic Kampuchea. When I spoke to the Security Council on January 13, I said the evidence was irrefutable that the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam had sent its armed forces across an international border into Democratic Kampuchea and had intervened in the internal affairs of that country. I deplored the armed intervention by Vietnam in the internal affairs of Democratic Kampuchea which violated its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. I urged the Council to reaffirm the sovereign right of the people of Democratic Kampuchea to determine their future by themselves free from interference from outside powers. I also urged the Council to call for the immediate and total withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from the territory of Democratic Kampuchea.

More than a month has passed since I spoke to the Council. Has the situation changed for the better? Has Vietnam withdrawn or begun to withdraw its forces from Democratic Kampuchea? Mr. President, the answers to both questions are unfortunately in the negative. Vietnam has not withdrawn its armed forces from Democratic Kampuchea. On the contrary, there is evidence to suggest that Vietnam has introduced additional troops into Democratic Kampuchea.

Hostilities between the forces of Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea continue and are taking place in various parts of the country. In addition, the Government of Vietnam concluded a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation on February 18, 1979, with the Government of the so-called People's Republic of Kampuchea. This shows that Vietnam intends to perpetuate its occupation of Kampuchea and is using the treaty as a means of legitimising its military presence there. The conclusion is therefore inescapable that Democratic Kampuchea continues to be a country occupied by the Vietnamese Army and that the so-called Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea headed by Heng Samrin is a Government imposed by the Vietnamese on the people of Democratic Kampuchea.

Mr. President, the issue in Democratic Kampuchea is clear. Vietnam has no right to send its armed forces into Democratic Kampuchea and to impose a regime on that country. The Security Council must therefore renew its demand for the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Democratic Kampuchea. Let the people of that country choose their own Government. Let Kampuchea regain its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Let it live in peace and in amity with all its neighbours. If these objectives can be achieved by convening a new international conference on Kampuchea, my Government will support such an initiative.

Mr. President, the peace, security and stability of the region of South-East Asia is being threatened by an intensifying rivalry between two of the great powers. This rivalry has fanned the flames of war in both Kampuchea and Vietnam. Unless checked, the flames of war could spread to other areas. We, who live in the region of South-East Asia, must resist this danger. We must not allow ourselves to become pawns in the rivalry between the great powers. We should learn to live with one another, in peace and in amity. If we have differences let us settle our differences by peaceful means, not by resort to force. Let us together make of South-East Asia, a zone of peace, of freedom and of neutrality.

- (c) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Extract from Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. S. Rajaratnam at the General Assembly, 29 September 1978 (Singapore Government Press Release MC/SEP/38/78 (Foreign Affairs))*

The two greatest threats to international peace and security are the unresolved problems of the Middle-East and of Southern Africa. On the Middle-East, I wish to reiterate Singapore's position. First, we believe that the Government of Israel must recognise the right of the Palestinians to a homeland of their own and that the Palestinians, must recognise the state of Israel and respect its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Secondly we believe that the issue of borders must be settled by negotiations on the basis of the principles of non-acquisition of territory by use of force and the right of states to live within secure and recognised borders. Thirdly, we remain convinced that Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 provide the framework for an overall settlement of the problems of the Middle East. We welcome the two agreements concluded between President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel at Camp David

as being a step forward. The two leaders have shown great courage. They deserve our support and commendation. We also wish to pay a tribute to President Carter for his remarkable statesmanship.

On the question of Namibia, we are dismayed by the decisions of the Government of South Africa to reject the proposals of the Secretary-General and to hold elections in Namibia without UN involvement. We hope that the new government of South Africa will reverse these decisions and resume co-operation with the UN for the peaceful transition of Namibia to independence. On Zimbabwe, we hope the time for a peaceful transition to majority rule has not run out. We make an urgent call to the United Kingdom, the United States and the front-line states to make one last effort to bring about a negotiated settlement acceptable to all the parties involved. As for South Africa, unless the abhorrent system of apartheid is rapidly dismantled, the prospects of a bloody racial confrontation become inevitable.

Reflecting on the sorry state of our contemporary world, Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Communist ideologue, offered humanity this piece of advice. "We need," he said, "the pessimism of the intelligence and the optimism of the will".

I can think of a no better formula for survival for humanity. It is one that I would commend to this organisation and to political leaders who are also statesmen. I have therefore attempted in this address to reflect the necessary spirit of hopeful pessimism about human prospects. Though the United Nations was formed for the specific purpose of addressing itself to the problems of humanity as a whole, in practice, most of us have generally avoided manifesting any earnestness about humanity lest we be thought somewhat eccentric and un-pragmatic.

So I hope your excellencies will bear with me if for a change I dedicate this address to the cause of global problems.

I begin with a quote from a man we all knew well and who cannot be charged with being intemperate in either his choice of words or expressions of ideas — the late U Thant, and for many years our Secretary-General:—

"I can only conclude," he said, "from the information that is available to me as Secretary-General that the members of the United Nations have perhaps 10 years in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and launch a global partnership to curb the arms race, to improve the human environment, to defuse the population explosion and supply the required momentum to development efforts. If such a global partnership is not forged within the next decade then, I very much fear that the problems I have mentioned will have reached such staggering proportions that they will be beyond our capacity to control."

That speech was made in 1969. The ten-year respite he gave for mankind to put its house in order will expire next year. None of us can honestly say that the links of a global partnership have been strengthened in the intervening years. The evidence points strongly to a contrary process. The presumed partnership between the rich

North and the poorer South is even more tenuous than it was in the early days of the UN when the rich were more forthcoming in helping the needy nations to be less poor.

As for U Thant's hope that ancient quarrels would disappear, there has not only been a more vigorous revival of ancient fouds since 1969 but also the proliferation of new enmities. The arenas for these expanding contests are almost wholly in the Third World. According to the *SIPRI World Armaments and Disarmament Year Book for 1976* there has been, between 1945 and 1975, in all 119 civil and international wars involving the territory of 69 states (i.e. nearly half the UN membership) and the armed forces of 81 nations. There have also been more than 300 coups and attempted coups in the Third World during the same period.

The authors of the Year Book also estimate that these wars have killed more people than did World War II.

Has the arms race abated since 1969? Has the special session on disarmament had any visible impact on the arms race? The answer to both questions is unfortunately in the negative. From 1970 to 1978, world military expenditures increased from \$200 billion to the current \$400 billion. After allowing for price inflation, the world's military spending has increased at an annual rate of 15 per cent. From 1970 to 1977, the world's armed forces increased from 21 million to 23 million. Exports of major weapons to Third World countries reached an estimated \$8 billion yearly, in constant 1975 dollars, almost three times such exports in 1970. The strategic nuclear stockpiles of the United States and the Soviet Union increased by 8,000 to a total of 14,000 warheads. Governed by these facts and figures, one is driven to the inescapable conclusion that, to borrow U Thant's words, the "mad momentum of the arms race" continues unabated.

As for defusing the population explosion, though there has been deceleration of population growth in some of the more developed of the developing countries, the situation generally is worse. Most developing countries are caught in a bind whereby even a most dramatic upsurge in the economy would be negated by a still higher rise in population. The old belief that the vast untapped resources of the earth and technological miracles could cope with any population increase has in recent years been shattered by contrary evidence. There are, we now realise, limits to technological miracles. The planets' resources are finite and we can't sustain life beyond these limits. There is considerable evidence to support the view that we have come dangerously close to these limits. Until about 1972 food prospects looked moderately hopeful. The population rose steadily by about 2 per cent annually but this was hopefully offset by a 3 per cent increase in food output. Great hopes were placed on the miracle rice developed in the Philippines and on the high-yielding wheat strains developed in Mexico.

This optimism turned out to be short-lived. In 1972 for a variety of complex reasons, total food production fell for the first time in more than 20 years. We now realise that the comforting statistics of earlier years concealed a number of unpleasant facts about grain production. The food demands of the Third World were met less by

the output of developing countries than by the increased output of wealthy countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and Argentina. They were able to do this because their farming was on a vast scale, highly scientific, highly capitalised and highly organised. It was energy-intensive, so that, say, one American farmer could feed 57 people where a farmer in a developing country would be hard put to it feeding even his family. Unfortunately the production processes of these few advanced agricultural producers, involving the use of fertiliser, machinery, freight, processing, marketing and pumping for irrigation, depended on one crucial product: cheap oil. Suddenly and unexpectedly the era of cheap oil came to an end, and with it, hopes of cheap food.

The rise in the price of oil has invariably made for dearer grain. In stating this fact, let me add that I am not giving credence to the somewhat misleading thesis that dearer oil is at the root of the global economic crisis, including the food crisis. The drift towards world recession and inflation had begun well before the rise in the price of oil.

The prospects for developing countries of maintaining steady growth simultaneously with a population explosion are pretty bleak. Because resources of the earth are finite, both rich and poor nations must now reshape plans for economic growth on the basis that mankind has entered an age of resource scarcity. We must develop new economic life styles. Mankind, in particular the affluent North, has been consuming raw materials at a rate which would leave posterity with little or nothing. The contemporary attitude of what is called the consumer society to the warnings of the ecologists is best summed up in a quip made by the American comedian, Groucho Marx, in response to some other matter: "So what? What has posterity done for me?" Our technology has made it possible for the first time in human history for one generation to deprive future generations of their due inheritance.

For example there is considerable evidence to show that at current rates of growth raw materials like aluminium, lead, manganese, nickel, tungsten and platinum could be exhausted within a century. Copper, silver, zinc and mercury within 50 years.

The only consolation offered is that we would have enough iron to last the next 150 years.

The biggest consumers of resources are the nations of the North. It consumes 9/10 of the world's oil output, most of its minerals, 4/5 of its fertilisers and 3/4 of its fish catch. The average northerner consumes perhaps 50 times more of the world's resources than the average consumer in a developing country.

These estimates would have to be revised drastically should the deprived two-thirds of humanity start consuming at even half the northern rate.

For a start, so I am informed, nitrogen and phosphate fertilizers, among other things, will run out within a few generations.

Some people look hopefully to the oceans to provide the resources the earth is incapable of providing in the near future. As I will

attempt to show in a moment, this too may turn out to be an illusion. Going by available evidence the oceans of the world too must be listed under the category of an endangered environment.

So long as our economic activities are directed towards satisfying human greed rather than human needs, there is no way of reversing the wasteful consumption of the earth's resources. To avert it, we need to recover the traditional reverence mankind has always had towards "mother earth". Our attitude to it today is more akin to that of a locust swarm which consumes without conserving.

I therefore commend an old farmer's saying as a possible way out of our dilemma. "One should live," so the saying goes, "as if one would die tomorrow and farm as if one would live forever".

That is all of ecology for you in one simple, irrefutable sentence.

I referred a short while ago to hopes that the ocean will be the new economic frontier. After all, it covers some 70 per cent of the earth's surface and there must be enough untapped resources to sustain a permanent age of affluence for all mankind.

Sensibly treated, the oceans can no doubt add considerably to our resources. Then so can the earth if economics became a science of balancing consumption and conservation, which at the moment is not the case.

In 1969, some 63 million metric tons of fish came from the sea. This is estimated to be approximately about a fifth of what the ocean can yield. The catch can be tripled within a short time without damage to the ocean provided fishing methods are changed. At the moment, fish is hunted down. We "catch" fish. We do not "farm" fish. We have yet to move from the hunting stage to a farming stage in respect of the sea. Given modern technology of fishing, it is more than possible, if there are no restraints, that within a short time, fish resources could be so depleted as to preclude our ever being able to move to a farming stage. Unfortunately for mankind, fish, despite their small brains, are global in outlook and habits. They migrate freely in an ocean without frontiers. We may divide the oceans of the world into the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans but fish and other sea organisms see only a single body of water of over 300 million cubic miles in volume in which to roam freely. They follow the ocean currents, which also move without regard to national frontiers. A species may spawn in one part of the ocean and graze in another; hundreds and thousands of miles away. The bountifulness of marine life is conditional on what we humans too until recently accepted as the "freedom of the seas".

Now that we have abandoned this concept in favour of territorial frontiers on the sea, it is problematical whether the oceans will be as rich in marine resources as they have been. Unless we can persuade fish to cultivate strong national loyalties, the chain of life in the oceans could be broken. Excessive harvesting at one point of the ocean or disruption of the migratory routes or the destruction of spawning grounds of fish through pollution or other causes can soon deplete the sea of its organic wealth. Because of the close interdependence

of marine life, an act by one nation within its territorial waters could destroy the vital assets of other nations thousands of miles away.

Apart from being a source of food, the ocean is a photosynthesiser that provides more than 70 per cent of the world's oxygen supply. Ocean currents follow established patterns and convey immense quantities of heat and moisture thousands of miles and, in the process, regulate the climate from the Equator to the Poles.

It is also highway for world trade, provided free by nature for all nations. A carve-up of ocean into sovereign zones could disrupt the global function oceans have performed from time immemorial.

Moreover, even as we debate how the oceans should be divided, we are also gradually converting them into global sewers. The oceans are now recipients of millions of tons of industrial wastes and poisonous chemicals discharged by increasingly polluted rivers as well as by oil slicks likely to multiply through unregulated oil exploration and sea-mining. Here too, these pollutants, like the sea creatures they are already killing off by their thousands, move without regard to frontiers to injure the culprits as well as nations not responsible for these offences.

Not only the sea, but soil, forests, rivers and the atmosphere itself are being progressively degraded. All these constitute the basics for any kind of life on earth — what the ecologists call the bio-sphere.

The problems I have dwelt upon so far are problems that transcend national frontiers and, if left unresolved, will bring, as the pessimists prophesy, disaster on all nations — the developed and the developing, the rich and the poor.

Is such a disaster inevitable? It is only inevitable if we refuse to face up to the facts that make it inevitable. We and not the stars are the authors of the human predicament. Since we are the authors, we can rewrite the story to make for a happier ending.

And how do we do this? I revert to U Thant's speech I quoted earlier. Only by entering into a true global partnership to cope with ever accumulating global problems can we resolve these seemingly intractable problems.

Given the intensity of contemporary nationalism, some would argue that it is not pragmatic to suggest approaches that require constraints on national interests on behalf of global interests. On the contrary, I believe that the global approach is the only pragmatic policy in a shrunken world.

The authoritative definition of "pragmatism" is the adoption of ideas, policies and proposals which are "useful, workable and practical".

In other words, pragmatic policies must produce the desired results and the whole of my address has been devoted to showing that, so far, policies based on narrow national interests have not only failed to resolve national problems but are also helpless before the accretion of global problems that threaten us all.

I take courage from the fact that narrow nationalism is already being undermined by the counter-forces of globalism. Even where this is not acknowledged publicly, quiet concessions are in practice made to globalism as a pragmatic conveniences. The three major bastions of national sovereignty — autonomy in respect of national economy, culture and defence — are increasingly being forced to come to terms with the reality of global interdependence. There is a growing realisation that solutions to national problems have to be sought outside national frontiers. Year by year, the areas where global co-operation has to be acknowledged are growing remorsefully, even though the concessions are made ungraciously.

This is reflected, for example, in the phenomenal growth of inter-governmental and non-governmental international organisations to co-ordinate and regulate functions of national importance. In 1910, according to the *Year Book of International Organisations*, there were 250 such organisations. By the early seventies they numbered some 2,500 and there must have been further additions since then. Their concerns range from commercial, industrial, financial, scientific and technological matters to co-ordinating matters relating to commodities, trade, health, aviation, shipping, communications, weights and measures and even refrigeration.

In theory, it is true we continue to behave and possibly even believe we are sovereign but, in practice, we are increasingly caught in a web of interdependence.

The cumulative and incremental expansion of global partnership is a process which can avert the disasters we fear. It is a slow process. It is undirected but it is there. I take comfort from the fact that all the great historic transformations of the past have also occurred through cumulative increments. This is how humanity evolved from hunters to agriculturists, from feudalism to capitalism and socialism, from autocracies to democracies and from savagery to civilisation of sorts. In none of these instances was the change instantaneous.

What is now required is a leadership which allies itself with the emerging force of interdependence and speeds up its triumph.

It is my hope that the new nations will give that leadership for the following reasons. First, they constitute the vast majority of the world's population. Second, the burden of the worsening world crisis will bear more heavily on them than on the developed north. Third, they stand to gain the most, should human affairs be conducted on the basis of an interdependency of nations.

What is really required to help the new force of globalism struggling to be born is what our Secretary-General, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, has often referred to as "political will". Although we live in an era of growing interdependence, the governments of member states are primarily motivated by the pursuit of national interests. The pursuit of national interests by 150 member states does not equate with global interest. Global partnership is the only alternative to global disaster. The realisation of global partnership will be a long and difficult task. For those who may feel intimidated by it, I offer a quotation from another Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld:

“Those are lost who dare not face the basic facts of international interdependence. Those are lost who permit defeats to scare them back to a starting point of narrow nationalism. Those are lost who are so scared by a defeat as to despair about the future”.

- (d) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation, 16th November 1978, on DISARMAMENT, in the First Committee*

Mr. Chairman, at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, my delegation posed the following question: If all of us are against the arms race, then who are responsible for the arms race? We concluded that we are all responsible.

Today, I would like to look again at the two basic questions we face in the problem of the arms race. First, what causes the arms race? Second, what can be done to curb it?

To examine the causes of the arms race, I propose to look at five different, but related, issues. These are:

- (1) Perception of national security and threats to national security;
- (2) Enhancement of a State's power and status;
- (3) Advance of technology;
- (4) Vested interests in the arms race; and
- (5) Public understanding of the arms race, and responses to it.

It is said, often enough, that nations arm themselves because they feel insecure. There are many reasons for such feelings of insecurity, but the first and most obvious one is that we live in a world in which violence is a fact of life. The second reason is that feelings of national insecurity stem from mistrust and suspicion among States. Often, historical animosities and fears form the basis of one State's perception of another's intentions and motives. Opposing national aspirations also influence such perception. States belonging to the same region often view each other with suspicion, each suspecting the other of harbouring ambitions for political domination or military conquest.

How this comes about has been interestingly described by Donald Keys, a well-known proponent of disarmament, as the “psychological aspects” of the arms race. The theory is, we tend to believe what we want to believe. For example, if we fear our neighbours and believe they are unfriendly, we are likely to project these fears onto our perception of their intentions towards us. Also, our perception is based on a “worst-case” situation in which the worst that can happen is expected to happen. The possibility that such a perception may be altered by evidence refuting the basis for any such threat is also reduced by the process of what Keys called “information filtration”. People tend to accept only the kind of information that reinforces their own beliefs and preconceived notions, especially those that confirm their worst fears and prejudices. Thus, convinced that the worst scenario will happen, a State feels impelled to acquire arms to meet the contingency of protecting itself against attack by a potential adversary. This leads to a national defence policy based on arms and

troops buildup. Such action by one State is not likely to be ignored by other States in the region, particularly, if the region is already riven by historical conflicts and rivalry. Hence, the acquisition of arms by one State spurs other States to do likewise. The cumulative effect is the start of an arms race among all those States that look upon each other as potential enemies.

The third reason for the arms race is the use of military might as a means to enhance the power and status of a State. Rightly or wrongly, weapons and large military forces are two of the indices of a nation's status and power. I need hardly remind this Committee that the five permanent members of the Security Council are also the five biggest military powers of the world and that they are also the five nuclear-weapon States. Since status and power are always desirable, this provides a strong incentive for acquiring military muscles. A State's military power can do two things. It can act as a deterrence against external attack. It can also be used to intimidate others. Even in the period since the UN was established, there have been numerous instances of States using their military power to achieve their political objectives. Furthermore, the possession of superior military strength is often assumed to give one negotiating weight and political leverage.

Another reason for the arms race arises from the fact that so much of the world's scientific brain-power, especially in the US and USSR, is being devoted to military-related research and development. The advance of military technology with ever greater destructive power quickly renders weapons obsolete. States therefore feel pressured constantly to replace their existing weaponry with purchases of the newest and most sophisticated armaments and weapons systems available in the market. Such action, in time, becomes self-justifying, and is often tenuously linked to the perception of any actual threat to national security. A scholar of disarmament matters, Ervin Laszlo, called this the operation of the "technological imperative". The advance of science and technology is not, regrettably, dependent on any set of moral values. New weapons technology often behaves like an amoral Frankenstein, and once developed, can become uncontrollable.

The vested interests that are served by the arms race is another reason for its perpetuation. The makers and sellers of weapons have to ensure a growing or, at least, continuing demand for their deadly products, unless their productive capacities can be converted for peaceful industrial uses. Disarmament may also be anathema to the military establishment as reduction in military expenditure may diminish the importance and influence of the military in government. The result is: the power of the military-industrial complex often overrides the greater claims of education, health and housing in a country; and the advocates of economic and social advancement have less say in the conduct of national affairs than the military establishment.

Mr. Chairman, let me now go on to the question of public understanding of the dangers of the arms race. Recently, at a seminar organised by UNITAR, Mrs. Inga Thorsson of the Swedish delegation, speaking on "humanizing the approach to disarmament", suggested several reasons why there is no loud and organized public outcry against the dangers of the escalating arms race. If the general public is aware

of the gravity of the threat posed by the arms race to the survival of humankind, then it would be reasonable to expect pressure around the world to make Governments take serious steps towards disarmament. Mrs. Thorsson observed that this does not and has not happened because people just do not realise what the so-called arms race and disarmament is all about! And those who do, despair as to whether anything can be done to stop it.

As for the uniformed, some may naively believe that, even if a nuclear war were to take place, the human race will survive and nations will rebuild themselves after the war, perhaps a bit wiser for the experience. These people simply do not realise the devastating scale of a general nuclear war that will so destroy the planet earth that survivors, if any, will be left only with the choice of either slow death or a return to a primitive level of civilization. So, what is the solution? The obvious need is for better understanding of this problem by every person. And to this end, education of the public on the meanings of MIRVs and MARVs, and facts and figures of the arms race, should be given wide support and attention.

Mr. Chairman, I shall now examine the question of what can realistically be done to curb the arms race. First, let me discuss the problem of the nuclear arms race, as we are all agreed that the potential for a world nuclear conflict presents the greatest threat to mankind.

The nuclear arms race has two aspects: one vertical, the other horizontal. On the first aspect, concerning the quantitative and qualitative race among the existing nuclear-weapon States, my delegation sees some hopes in some of the proposals and measures that are being considered. One such measure is the proposal by Canada to negotiate an agreement to stop all production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. We believe this is one way of approaching the problem and would commend it.

Another measure is the SALT II negotiations between USA and USSR. It represents a genuine attempt on the part of the two most powerful nuclear-weapon States to reduce the dangers of nuclear warfare and mutual annihilation. We can only hope their current negotiations will result in an early agreement on a SALT II Treaty and that they will proceed soon thereafter to start talks on a SALT III Treaty, focussing on qualitative curbs of their nuclear arms race as well as the actual reduction of their nuclear arsenals.

Regarding the qualitative arms race among the nuclear-weapon States, William Epstein, a distinguished Canadian diplomat and scholar, has argued convincingly that it is *not* meaningful, or useful, to arrive at any agreement on how many nuclear weapons and delivery systems can be deployed, without agreeing to restrain the qualitative improvement of such weapons and their delivery systems, as well as restraining the development of new kinds of weapons systems. We now have in our vocabulary, terms such as cruise missiles, the SS-20, the "Backfire" bomber, neutron bombs, Trident submarines, weapons that use laser rays and electron beams. Where do they all end? We understand that missiles can be designed to attain an accuracy of within a few hundred feet of target, though launched from distances of thousands of miles. Some can be used even for destruction of satellites, thus

bringing the arms race to the outer space. What next? To end this madness, the following measures are the minimum that ought to be taken. First, all States should agree on a moratorium on the testing of all nuclear weapons and nuclear devices, pending the conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Second, we would urge the three nuclear-weapon States currently engaged in negotiations on a CTB Treaty to arrive at an early agreement. Until the Treaty is completed, we would support the proposal to observe a moratorium against tests in any environment. Third, my delegation supports the Swedish proposal for the establishment of an international seismological data centre for better verification of the observance, and enforcement, of a CTB Treaty. Fourthly, we also support efforts towards an agreement to ban flight-testing of nuclear war-heads delivery systems, and lastly, an agreement to limit, or to reduce progressively, military spending on development of new strategic nuclear weapon systems.

Mr. Chairman, let me now focus my analysis on what can be done to curb horizontal proliferation. The most immediate concern is an agreement on better and non-discriminatory safeguards, under IAEA auspices, against the proliferation of nuclear fissionable materials, and to control their use for peaceful purposes. We believe a full nuclear fuel-cycle evaluation exercise will contribute towards this objective.

Yet another initiative to curb the spread of nuclear weapons is for States in a region to declare, and for the nuclear-weapon States to observe, a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The Tlateloco Treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America, which was signed in 1967, and which now enjoys almost full acceptance by the Latin American States and the five nuclear-weapon States, is a model for similar efforts in other regions or sub-regions.

Mr. Chairman, though we must not lose sight of the importance of concerted efforts at curbing the nuclear arms race and nuclear proliferation, we should not, however, belittle the impact and consequences of wars fought with conventional weapons. Since the catastrophic events at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, mankind has so far been mercifully spared more horrors of the use of nuclear weapons. But in the period since 1945, 133 wars have been fought, all with conventional weapons, resulting in the killing of 25 million people. Also, it is a fact that about 80% of global military expenditures are spent on conventional weapons. As annual global expenditures are currently running at about \$400 billion, this makes the total sum spent on conventional weapons to be about \$320 billion! This speaks for the urgency of the need for the world community to recognise the problem we have with the conventional arms race, and to find means to check the momentum of world spending on conventional weapons.

It is heartening to see that some efforts are beginning to be made to check this conventional arms race, both by supplier States and recipient States. The objective of suppliers of conventional weapons should be an agreement to restrain production and transfer of such weapons. We note that bilateral talks between USA and USSR on this question have begun. We welcome the initiative they have taken and we look forward to further progress in their consultations. While it is obviously important for the two largest suppliers of arms to hold such talks, we believe, other major suppliers should eventually be

involved. If not, restraint exercised by USA and USSR will simply be exploited by other suppliers of arms, which will take over the markets and expand their sales.

Going now to the recipient side, my delegation believes the initiative must be taken together by States in a region or sub-region. Initiatives must be taken to reduce tensions and increase confidence among States in a region. Peaceful means must be found for resolution of regional disputes and conflicts. And, discussions must begin on putting a limit on both quantitative and qualitative aspects of arms imports into a region.

Mr. Chairman, it is always easy to suggest solutions, but if the solutions are to have any utility, they must take account of the stark realities of the world in which we live. For example, we must recognise the reality of a divided world with its opposing ideological, political and national interests. With detente, we have the passing of the worst period of the Cold War. But, East-West rivalry and competition for influence is still very much a dominant factor in international relations, and, the supply, or withholding of supply, of arms to recipient States is often used to extract political or military advantage for the supplier State. I had earlier mentioned how economic advantage from arms sales also poses an obstacle to voluntary restraints on exports. Apart from the easily understandable relationship of "more sales and more profits", there is also the oft-mentioned economy-of-scale factor in arms production, which makes unit costs lower in production for large markets than in production only for smaller domestic markets.

On the other side, the recipients are of course not without their share of problems. The world is torn by regional conflicts, most between Third World countries themselves. These conflicts, together with distrust and suspicions, desire for image-building and leadership ambitions, all provide incentives for increasing arms purchases.

Turning to a brighter prospect, I would like to cite the initiative which has been taken by a number of Latin American countries to deal with this problem. I refer to the Latin American States' Declaration of Ayacucho of 1974. In the Declaration, eight Latin American States made known their intentions to halt the acquisition of offensive weapons and to eliminate excessive expenditures on arms in general. During the Special Session, the President of Venezuela invited all Latin American States to consider the possibility of pursuing the subject further. Then in August this year, representatives of 20 Latin American countries met at Mexico City to hold consultations on the question of transfer of conventional weapons. This initiative by the Latin Americans is greatly welcomed by my delegation. We wish them success and hope that in the field of conventional arms, as in the field of nuclear arms, they will point the way for the rest of the Third World to follow.

Another area where regional differences have become muted through co-operation in common pursuits is the sub-region of South-East Asia, through the Association of South-East Asian Nations, comprising Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and my own country, Singapore. Formed eleven years ago, ASEAN has gone a long way towards promoting understanding, peace and stability in the sub-region.

Economic co-operation among the five member States is now a concrete fact; mutual consultation have become a habit and a valuable aspect of their conduct of relations with each other and with States outside the Association. So, a positive move towards confidence-building has already been made by ASEAN. We strongly urge developing countries in other regions of the world to consider establishing such organizations for economic cooperation.

Lastly, I would like to examine what other measures are available for curbing the arms race and containing conflict among States. At the UN level, the question of banning chemical weapons has been discussed for the past 20 years. To date, we still have no agreement on the question although substantial progress has been made. My delegation hopes that the new Committee on Disarmament will speed up its negotiations on a chemical weapons ban and that agreement will be reached in the near future.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons concluded in 1971 is an important measure taken to ban conventional weapons that are particularly cruel and dangerous. It is encouraging that efforts continue to be made to reach agreement on a ban on other such weapons. In this area, my delegation looks hopefully to the proposed UN Conference next year on the question of a ban on the production and use of incendiary weapons, and other conventional weapons that are excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects.

Another possibility for action at the UN level is towards a more effective UN system for maintaining international peace and security. As the UN can only be what its member States want it to be, we should all contribute to strengthening the peace-keeping and peace-making role of the UN.

Mr. Chairman, to sum up, the first step towards solving the problem of the arms race should be that, we must all seek a better understanding of its causes. Next, in order to curb the nuclear arms race, all States must support meaningful and realistic measures towards that end. On the problem of the conventional arms race, restraints must be exercised to the extent possible by both suppliers and recipients. And lastly, outside the UN, and at the level of the general public, more should be done to promote interest, awareness and concern in the problem of massive buildup of both nuclear and conventional armaments. A better understanding and appreciation by all of us, of the causes of the arms race and the threat it poses to our survival, would create a saner approach to living in a politically and ideologically divided world.

- (e) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement by Singapore's Representative to the Second Committee, Miss V. Menon, 13 October 1978*

Mr. Chairman, according to the World Bank's annual report for 1978, its overall studies of developing country economies point to the fact that on average, recovery from the recession years of 1973-75 that began in 1976 continued, and, that prospects for 1978 are likely to be unchanged. The report goes on to point out however that the

continued growth of developing country economies is a fragile one, and aggregate figures obscure the fact that many problems still remain. Projections for future growth are modest indeed and the report warns that these modest prospects can only be assured if the long-term trend towards closer international relationships among developed and developing countries continue. Among the measures that might be taken to reinforce the movement towards better economic relationships among nations is to stimulate further trade relationships between industrialized and developing countries.

A major feature of international economic relations in the past has been the dependence of the developing countries, the producers of primary products, on the developed countries which dictated the pace and direction of the world economy. While most developing countries continue to be exporters of primary products, some of them have, in recent years, made significant progress in the field of manufacturing industries and are now exporters of manufactured goods. According to the World Bank's annual report for 1978, a decade ago, there were no more than half a dozen developing nations exporting an appreciable amount of manufactured goods. Today their number has increased fivefold. Industrialization in the developing countries is the result of the transformation of their economies and represents their effort to obtain self-sustaining growth. It is acknowledged that exports can be a dynamic factor in overall growth. For some developing countries, like Singapore, which have not had the good fortune to be endowed with natural resources, the trade in manufactures is absolutely essential to their survival. Manufacturing which formed 11.4% of the GNP in 1960 doubled to 25.4% in 1977.

What has been the response to this new pattern of international economic relations? Mr. Chairman, it is one of the ironies of the contemporary world that even as developing countries are moving away from the dependent relationships of the past and are trying to finance their development efforts through increased exports of manufactured goods, they find the door closed in their faces. There has, regrettably, only been friction and defensive responses on the part of the developed countries, so much so that it has led some to describe the present inter-relationship between the developed and developing countries, as one of "competitive confrontation".

I would like at this point to refer to the very thoughtful and constructive statement made in the Second Committee by the distinguished Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. In his statement, Mr. Dadzie pointed out that, and I quote, "what must remain the central guide to international action is this concept of a New International Economic Order as one embodying restructured institutional arrangements to promote the economic and social progress of the developing countries in the context of an expanding world economy".

For developing countries, exporting manufactures, liberalization of trade is a key issue. While a great deal of lip service is given to the concept of free trade, in practice, Mr. Chairman, there has, as we know, been an alarming growth in protectionist tendencies in the developed world in response to recession and unemployment in these countries. There is a popular notion that it is the flood of cheap imports from

the developing countries that has contributed to the expansion in the ranks of the jobless in the developed countries. However it might be relevant to point out here that a recent study made in one industrialized country has concluded that computerization and mechanization may be more responsible for the unemployment problem than the cheap imports of the developing countries. It has been easier for the developed countries to impose various trade barriers than embark on restructuring their economies and re-orient existing industrial policies, all of which may be politically unpalatable in the domestic context.

Instead of phasing out present restraint arrangements, as restructuring takes place, we are dismayed by what we see as growing intransigence and inflexibility in the attitudes of the developed countries in recent international negotiations affecting international trade. The new Multi-Fiber Agreement that was negotiated at the end of last year is a case in point. The new Agreement is in many ways more restrictive than the old one, and in addition, is being applied to many more countries, including those that are not yet major exporters of textiles. The effect of this Agreement may severely reduce export growth of clothing and textiles of not only the major exporters, but also of the smaller, poorer and less advanced developing countries where textile products usually comprise a large share of manufactured exports.

In the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, my country, Mr. Chairman, has taken the position, along with other members of the Group of 77, that developing countries should be exempted from safeguard measures. Such measures take the form of increased tariffs and quantitative import restraints. My country believes that developed countries should introduce adjustment assistance measures to ailing industries, thereby making recourse to safeguards unnecessary. Thus the transfer of resources and technology towards more efficient economic sectors or countries would contribute to a more rational international division of labour. However, in these negotiations, the developed countries continue to insist on the retention of the safeguard provisions.

Not only has there been a lack of any signs of removing import restrictions but an alarming development has also appeared in the negotiations presently going on within the framework of the MTN, aimed at obtaining preferential treatment for exports from the developing countries. I refer here to the determination of certain developed countries to differentiate between developing countries for the purpose of giving Special and Differential Treatment for certain products. This is the proposal for the "graduation" scheme. This proposal calls for the graduation of a country from the ranks of the developing countries once a certain level of development is reached. Concomitant with this, Special and Differential Treatment would be withdrawn, including those under GSP, wherein the donor countries concerned can modify or withdraw the preferences.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is strongly opposed to the adoption of this graduation clause in the MTN package. This is closely related to the demand of the developed countries for strict reciprocity. We argue that no coercion in the form of a graduation clause is necessary as developing countries are willing to take on more responsibilities commensurate with their developmental status. Many of them have tabled their offers in the context of the MTN. What is most unacceptable in this approach however is that it allows one set of

countries to arbitrarily graduate and classify developing countries. We contend that if at all graduation is applied, there has to be a proper set of criteria drawn up with the agreement of all and adhered to strictly. We would also like to emphasize the importance of having mutual and prior consultations before any preferences are withdrawn.

Mr. Chairman, it is not our intention to place all the blame on the developed countries for some of the problems facing the developing countries. The latter must also respond to the changing international environment. My country has tried to adjust to the prevailing international economic situation. We have learned from the difficulties of other developing countries who had been ahead of us in economic development and industrialization. In the 1960's the industries we started with were labour-intensive (wood products, sawmills, plywood and veneer, textiles, garments and plastics). By the late 1960's we deliberately moved away from such over-dependence on any single export-sensitive industry. We diversified into electrical, electronic goods, precision and optical equipment, ship-repairing and shipbuilding. We consciously sought more skill-intensive and less export sensitive industries, such as (machine tools, electronic meters, miniature ball bearings etc.).

On a regional level, my country together with its partners, in ASEAN (the Association of South-East Asian Nations) have opted for the principle of collective self-reliance, and through various economic co-operation schemes are trying to strengthen the horizontal linkages among the five countries. Our efforts to increase trade among the five have led to the signing of a Preferential Trading Agreement. ASEAN countries have also agreed on the setting up of industrial projects in each of the five countries, the products of which will enjoy preferential treatment in ASEAN markets. By these collective efforts we hope to improve the standards of living of the peoples in these countries.

Growth in the developing countries cannot however be brought about by the developing countries alone. The imperatives of a global economy demand that an environment must be created which can ensure their continued growth. This means access to markets and the technology of the developed countries. Growing prosperity in the developing countries will enhance the momentum of growth in the developed countries. As Mr. Dadzie mentioned, there is obviously a need for a reformed external framework to assist the industrialization of the developing countries. The 1978 World Bank report also points out and I quote:

"Developed countries must realize that moves in the direction of specialization and comparative advantage are inexorable. Creation of artificial barriers can only delay — not stop the process. Self-interest on both sides dictates, therefore, that measures be taken to allow the workings of a world economy to move gradually but steadily, rather than convulsively, towards the inevitable outcome".

The North-South relationship cannot be one of master and serf or patron and client. We are, whether we like it or not, in the words of the great statesman, Lester Pearson, "partners in development". We will sink or swim together.

- (f) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement by Ambassador T.T.B. Koh, Permanent Representative of Singapore, on UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS*

Mr. President, today we mark the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. During the past 30 years, the United Nations has adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and a host of other declarations and conventions. The corpus of international norms, standards and principles which the United Nations has enacted in the field of human rights is an extremely impressive one.

What is very disturbing is that there is little congruence between these norms, standards and principles which we profess to uphold and the actual behaviour or conduct of nations. How can we explain this discrepancy? There are probably several reasons which account for this discrepancy. The first reason is the deceitful behaviour of some member States which pretend, at the United Nations, to subscribe to these norms, standards and principles and which they violate flagrantly at home. The second reason is that many developing countries regard these norms, standards and principles as ideals or goals which they will strive to achieve but which, in the short-term, they are unable to implement to the full. The third reason is that some member States regard these norms, standards and principles as being applicable to others, especially to their adversaries, but not to themselves.

In recent years, the representatives of some Western countries have argued that the violation of human rights is no longer to be treated as a matter falling exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of a State, but is a proper concern for the whole international community. This raises one of the most controversial doctrinal issues relating to the field of human rights and one on which there is no consensus. There appears to be at least three schools of thought on this question. The first school of thought, to which the Western States generally belong, holds the view that the question human rights transcends the domestic jurisdiction of a State and has become a matter of international concern. The second school of thought is that as a general rule, how a State treats its citizens is a matter which falls within the domestic jurisdiction of that State. But if there is a pattern of gross or extensive violation of human rights, then the situation is no longer protected by paragraph seven of Article 2 of the UN Charter and becomes a question of international concern. The third school of thought is a cynical one and one which seems to guide the actions of some member States at the United Nations. The third school of thought regards human rights as a political weapon to be used against one's adversaries. Under this school of thought, one would never question the violation of human rights by a friendly state, but one would censure the violation of human rights by one's political adversaries.

Mr. President, if one examines the record of the United Nations in the field of human rights, one is impressed, on the one hand, with the tremendous corpus of international norms, standards and principles which the United Nations has given birth to but, on the other hand, one is depressed by the non-compliance of member States with these international norms, standards and principles. One should also be

concerned at the selective way in which countries are censured for violations of human rights. There is clearly no uniform application of the rules to everyone. Some States are condemned. Other States, including some whose records may be just as bad or even worse, literally get away with murder.

(g) *UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation in the Third Committee on RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION*

Madam Chairman, one of the major achievements of the United Nations, over the past decade, has been its consistent efforts to heighten mankind's consciousness of the evils of racism and racial discrimination. These efforts culminated in the adoption of several Conventions and Resolutions which, today, have become bench-marks for measuring the progress towards political and economic equality and the spread of social justice.

The World Conference to combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, held in Geneva in August 1978, was another step in the continuing struggle to eradicate Man's inhumanity to his fellow-beings. The Programme of Action contained in the Report of the Conference (Document A/33/262) is particularly noteworthy as it urgently sets out the measures to be taken, at the national, regional and international levels, to eradicate racism and racial discrimination throughout the world.

In the UN, Madam Chairman, the tendency has been to concentrate on the race situation in the southern part of the African continent. In a way this is perfectly understandable since the system of apartheid is the most blatant and obnoxious form of racism and racial discrimination. Like the other Member States of the UN, my country is committed to the battle against racism and discriminatory practices, including *apartheid*. The situation now prevailing in Zimbabwe, Namibia and Azania cannot long endure. No force on earth can deny the ultimate triumph of the majority of the people in these countries in their quest for freedom, equality and self-respect.

However, Madam Chairman, even as we are, at this moment, absorbed by the unfolding of events in Southern Africa, we should not ignore the fact that racial discrimination exists in other parts of the world too. It is indeed a more widespread phenomenon than we would like to believe or admit to ourselves. In fact one of the most disturbing features of the post-war political scene has been the increase in racial and ethnic conflicts in various parts of the world, some of them with unbelievable ferocity and results. It has been estimated that in recent years nearly half of the independent countries of the world have experienced racial/ethnic conflicts. Another noteworthy feature is that such conflicts have occurred both in developed and developing societies. Nor have the socialist countries been spared the horrors of conflicts inspired by racial and ethnic differences.

Madam Chairman, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination has been referred to by many preceding speakers. My delegation agrees with the view that it would be desirable for as many countries as possible to become parties to the Convention.

But, it would be a mistake to think that if all member States of the UN were to become parties to the Convention, the evils of racism and racial discrimination would disappear. What is required is for all States, both those that have become parties to the Convention, and those who have not done so, to faithfully practise the norms of racial equality at home.

Madam Chairman, the United Nations stands for the achievement of universal peace and brotherhood. These lofty aims cannot be realised if countries persist in treating some of their peoples as second-class citizens and continue to deny them their basic rights. Hence, in addition to ending racism and racial discrimination in Southern African, the UN should also concern itself with the arrest of racial conflicts and discrimination in other parts of the World. Member States should show sincerity in adopting and implementing the Programme of Action contained in the Report of the World Conference to combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

- (h) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of Singapore Delegation in the Third Committee, 14 November 1978, on the OFFICE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES*

Madam Chairman, the problem of refugees and displaced persons has been with us throughout the ages. Since 1945 it has become more serious as more and more people have been forced to leave their homes and countries to seek refuge and shelter elsewhere. The problem of refugees will be with us for as long as we are unable to prevent political convulsions within States, and to prevent conflict within as well as between States.

Since the problem of refugees and displaced persons is international in character, it is only appropriate that the UN should be concerned to find both short-term and long-term solutions for it. We would like to pay a tribute to the UNHCR for the humanitarian assistance it has rendered and continues to render to refugees throughout the world. My delegation listened carefully to the statement made by Mr. Poul Hartling, the UN High Commissioner Refugees, yesterday morning. We share the sense of realism which has reflected in his statement. In particular, we are in agreement with his remark that "the UNHCR must balance, in harmony, national and regional perceptions and concerns with ideals and actions that are universally valid".

Madam Chairman, although the refugee problem is a global one, we are naturally particularly concerned about the problem in Southeast Asia. The Vietnam war ended 3 years ago but the human exodus from the Indochinese States has not abated. On the contrary, the flow of refugees from those States has increased in recent times. This has placed the other countries of Southeast Asia in a very difficult position. As the distinguished delegate of Thailand pointed out in his statement yesterday, his country alone has had to cope with over 130,000 registered Indo-chinese displaced persons.

The immediate burden of coping with this grave problem has largely fallen on the neighbouring States. Out of humanitarian con-

siderations they have responded, as best as they could, in giving immediate succour and assistance to the refugees. To expect, however, that these States of first asylum should continue to carry the increasing burden of caring for the refugees is unfair and unrealistic. Being developing countries they are already hard pressed to look after the welfare of their own peoples. Most of these countries are faced with population pressures. In the case of my own country, for instance, which is roughly three times the size of Manhattan Island it has to cope with a population density of 10,000 persons per square mile, the highest among the 150 member States of the UN. Because of our limited size and physical resources we have had to limit the number of refugees we can accommodate at any one time to 1,000. It is therefore obvious that a long-term solution for the problems posed by the refugees cannot be found in the countries neighbouring the Indo-Chinese States.

While it is to be noted that some countries outside the region have manifested their concern by offering material assistance and permanent refuge for the refugees, the offers do not match the scale of the problem. The wealthy countries, as well as those fortunate developing countries with small population and a large resource base, should try to absorb more of the refugees from Southeast Asia.

There has to be greater international awareness, concern and commitment. In this connection the proposal by the UN High Commissioner for consultations between him and interested Governments is a timely initiative. We hope that these consultations would result in more commitments by States to accept the large numbers of Indo-chinese refugees.

Also in this regard my delegation notes with interest the High Commissioner's reference to pooling arrangements which would have the effect of promoting a swifter resettlement of the refugees and displaced persons in a wider range of countries. The setting up of a pooling arrangement amongst interested and concerned second asylum countries could contribute towards a more efficient and planned procedure for the global resettlement of refugees. We share his view that the pace of resettlement has a direct influence on the capacity of countries in the region to receive new arrivals. My own country, for instance, has had to limit the stay of refugees landed in Singapore to 90 days, both for the purpose of expediting their resettlement elsewhere and to make room for new arrivals.

Madam Chairman, I would now like to turn to the ECOSOC resolution contained in document A/C.3/33/L.19 which recommends the enlargement of the membership of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme by up to nine additional members. It is apparent that the concerns and spheres of activity of the High Commissioner for Refugees have steadily mounted over the years. In order to reflect accurately these concerns and range of problems the High Commissioner should have the benefit of receiving advice from a larger number of Governments representing States with a vital concern for the problems of refugees and displaced persons.

In the event of the ECOSOC resolution being adopted by the General Assembly my delegation would strongly support the candi-

duration of the Royal Thai Government for a seat on the enlarged Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's programme.

- (i) *UN General Assembly: 33 Session 1978, Statement by Singapore's Representative to the Third Committee, Mr. K. Kesavapany, on ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND WAYS AND MEANS WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE CREATION OF THE POST OF UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS*

Madam Chairman, one of the more notable achievements of the United Nations has been the role it has played in developing a universal definition of human rights. The holocaust of the Second World War stirred the conscience of the international community into seeking to define the basic rights of man and to protect the worth of the human person. The answer was found in the enactment and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The two Covenants which followed helped to further define these basic rights and freedoms in the particular areas of human activity—i.e. Economic, Social, Cultural, Civil and Political.

These achievements have made it possible to evolve, for the first time in the history of mankind, a doctrine of human rights applicable to all countries and peoples at any cultural or technological level of development and regardless of ideology or political system. In other words we have reached a broadly acceptable position in international affairs that the standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms are the same regardless of country, or the race, colour or creed of the people.

However, while the basic principles and standards of human rights have been set and accepted by the international community, there are differences in the way these rights are put into practice. These differences are, in the main, the result of the varying political philosophies concerning the relationship between the individual and the State, and because of the vastly different social and economic circumstances of her countries. In western political philosophy the individual is given prominence and hence his rights and freedoms are given the greatest importance. In marxist political philosophy, the emphasis is on the welfare and well-being of society as a whole. The rights of the individual are secondary to those of the society, the revolution or the party. These differences of approach to the question of human rights are further accentuated by the differing levels of economic, cultural and social development. In developing societies, in particular, one is sometimes confronted with a conflict of priorities between social and economic rights and the political rights of the individual. Where there is a trade-off between social and economic rights, on the one hand, and civil and political rights, on the other hand, the governments of developing countries have to make an agonising choice. I am not preaching the thesis that the curtailment of the civil and political rights of citizens is a necessary pre-condition of economic development. I am not, by any means, attempting to justify political oppression practised in the name of economic development.

In some developing societies, questions of ethnicity, language and religion are invested with great emotions. The convulsions these questions can cause could well destroy the very fabric of the State. In such situations it may be necessary to proscribe the rights of the individual to exploit such explosive issues. In a crowded theatre, does one have a right to shout fire ! and cause panic and pandemonium?

Given these difficulties and differences between and within States, my delegation does not think the time is ripe to establish the Office of a UN High Commission for Human Rights. The office is likely to become politicised and partisan like the Human Rights Commission. Political pressure will be brought to bear on the High Commissioner to investigate some infringements of human rights but not others. Some countries, which have influential or numerous friends, will avoid being investigated while others, with few friends, would have no recourse but to subject themselves to scrutiny.

Madam Chairman, the attitude of my delegation towards the question of the establishment of a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is that conditions do not exist now which would enable the High Commissioner to carry out his work objectively, impartially and efficaciously. We have evaluated the performance of the UN, including the Human Rights Commission, in the field of human rights, and have come to the conclusion that it is impossible, at this time, to insulate the High Commissioner's office from political pressure, and partisanship. For this reason we would abstain when the proposal is put to a vote.

(j) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation on POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RELATING TO YOUTH*

Madam Chairman,

As a young nation both in terms of its existence as an independent nation and the demographic composition of its population, my country is vitally interested in all issues pertaining to youth. My delegation has been impressed by the unanimity of views in this Committee in according the topic on youth a high degree of priority and to place it as the first item on the agenda.

Out of my country's total population of 2.3 million, nearly 55 per cent are below the age of forty years. A significant component of this percentage may be termed youths i.e. those falling between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. Approximately 20,000 young men and women leave school annually to enter the employment market and to take their place in the adult world.

Less well-endowed by Nature than other countries, Singapore lacks natural resources of any kind. It has to depend wholly upon the quality and skills of its human resources for its livelihood and continued growth. My country is therefore mindful of the great emphasis to be placed on the need to nurture and mobilise its most precious asset, its youth. We have to ensure that in time to come they will be suitably equipped to play their part in the task of nation building and help construct a better world for those who come after them.

Like youths in developing countries and elsewhere the youth of Singapore are also experiencing doubts and uncertainties caused by rapid mobility and cultural change in a rapidly transforming world. They are being exposed to habits and life styles alien to their traditional cultural values and norms. More specifically the youths in my country today have to face with such issues as problems of communication with their elders, eastern versus western values, national versus cultural identity, youth crimes including drug addiction and questions of morality.

To prevent their alienation from society and to ensure their participation in the mainstream of the nation's life, my country pursues an active youth programme.

To channel their ceaseless energies for productive purposes, we have set up several institutions. Chief among these is the Peoples Association, founded in 1960, to mobilise the masses, and youth in particular, in the participation of social, cultural, recreational and vocational activities. Under the aegis of the Association a network of 189 Community Centres have been set up all over the country. These Centres constitute a significant influence in shaping youth ideals and community consciousness by providing an infrastructure for youth efforts.

Apart from the professional staff of over 1,000 and the voluntary management committees running these Centres, there exists, within each Community Centre a youth sub-committee whose function is to take the initiative in suggesting and planning youth activities. The formation of these youth sub-committees indicate the dual concern that youth must both develop initiative and leadership capacity as well as directly share in making decisions that affect their own needs and welfare.

As community development and youth work rests substantially on the effectiveness of the leadership provided by the youth sub-committees and the Management Committees of the Centres, my country has set up training institutions wherein to develop quality leadership. There are two such training institutions, namely the National Youth Leadership Training Institute and the Outward Bound School. The programmes conducted by these institutions are aimed at developing such qualities as initiative, self-reliance, endurance etc.

In addition to these state-sponsored institutions there also exist voluntary youth movements such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Cadet Corps, Boys Brigades, YMCA. The contribution made by such voluntary groups is acknowledged and they are, in fact, encouraged to diversify their programmes to cater for the constantly changing requirements of our times.

Madam Chairman, I have briefly outlined the position of my country on the question of policies and programmes relating to youth. Let me also briefly touch upon a related matter—the question of the proclamation of an International Youth Year by the UN. My delegation concurs with the view expressed by several delegations that such a move would be beneficial as it would help focus the attention of the global community on the problems and challenges confronting the

youth of today. However, we have to take note of two important factors. Firstly, the Secretary-General in his report A/33/257 has pointed out that additional study would be required before he could be in a position to comment on whether the proclamation of such a year is desirable and, if so, the appropriate framework and specific activities for its observance. Secondly, it is to be noted that the UN would be proclaiming its Year of the Child in 1979. My delegation feels that much of the impact would be lost if the UN were to proceed on another proclamation on a related such so soon afterwards. It would be best to allow a sufficient period of time to elapse after the Year of the Child has ended before embarking on the launching of the International Youth Year.

Thank You.

- (k) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement by Ambassador T.T.B. Koh, Permanent Representative of Singapore, on QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION*

Mr. Chairman

North-South Dialogue

Developments in the last few years suggest that the question of the dissemination of news and information will become a new focal point of the North-South Dialogue. After two years of negotiations, UNESCO adopted by acclamation, on 22 November 1978, a "declaration of fundamental principles concerning the contribution of the mass media to strengthening peace and international understanding, the promotion of human rights and to countering racialism, apartheid and incitement to war." I hope that the UN General Assembly will be guided by the same spirit of international co-operation and mutual understanding. We must avoid a sterile confrontation over this issue. Let us work together to identify the shortcomings and defects of the present situation and let us try to come up with well thought-out and practical solutions to these problems.

The Status Quo Is Unfair

Mr. Chairman, representatives of the third world complain that the present state of the dissemination of information in the world is unfair and unsatisfactory. It is unfair for two reasons. First, it is unfair because there is an imbalance between the volume of information flowing from the developed countries to the developing countries and the volume of information flowing from developing countries to the developed countries. According to one source, only about 25% of the information disseminated by the five largest news agencies of the world emanate from the developing countries.

The second reason why the present situation is viewed as unfair is that nearly 80% of the information circulating in the world originates with the five major news agencies, namely TASS, Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters and Agence France Press.

The developing countries have several grievances. They are aggrieved because the peoples of the developing countries are forced

to see the world, including other countries in the third world, through foreign eyes. Those eyes belong to the staff reporters of the five leading news agencies. The developing countries are aggrieved also because, in their view, much of the output of news they receive is superficial or irrelevant or distorted by the ethnocentric bias of the reporters. Finally, they are aggrieved because the Western news agencies tend to play up the pestilence, disease, coup d'état, corruption and failures of the third world and seldom, if ever, report on their achievements.

More Coverage of Third World

Mr. Chairman, I turn first to the complaint that only about 25% of the news disseminated by the leading news agencies emanate from the third world. I think it would be desirable if the news agencies were to increase their coverage of the third world. In order to do this, we have to persuade the leaders of the news agencies as well as the editors of the newspapers, television and radio stations in the West that developments in the third world are important to their national interests. This should be done in the developing countries as well.

How To Make The Third World More Interested In Itself?

The fact is that in both the developed countries, and in the developing countries, the man-in-the-street is more interested in news about the developed countries than about the developing countries. This phenomenon is born of several causes. First, it is born of the reality that Washington, Moscow, London and Paris are the military, economic and cultural power centres of our world. This is why third world newspapers send their foreign correspondents to America and Western Europe and not to other parts of the third world. The second reason why readers in the third world are much more interested in developments in the West than in their own regions or in other parts of the third world is that it is a relic of the colonial experience. For hundreds of years we have looked to the metropolitan powers as the centre of the universe and this is an attitude which does not change quickly. The developing countries should, however, try to interest their peoples in their regional neighbours and in other countries of the third world. The situation in Southeast Asia has improved very significantly over the past eleven years. Until the formation of ASEAN, the peoples of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Singapore knew very little about one another and had very little interest in learning more. The situation today is completely different. This is reflected in the volume as well as quality of the information our mass media carry about one another.

A Third World News Agency

I agree with my colleagues from the third world in expressing regret at the fact that nearly 80% of the information circulating in the world are disseminated by the five leading news agencies, four of which belong to the West and one to the Soviet Union. This regrettable fact, however, also reflects a reality of the world. The third world is under-developed not only in the economic sphere, but also in the cultural sphere. This is why there is no third world news agency. What is to be done? I do not think that the solution to the problem lies in curtailing the activities of the five news agencies of developed

countries in the third world. The equality we seek is not by bringing the developed countries down to our level. What we should concentrate on doing is to promote the development in the third world of one or more non-government-controlled news agencies. This cannot come about over night. It can only evolve if the major news organisations in the third world were to co-operate with one another in the establishment of a news agency or agencies and if the developed countries, and the news agencies of the developed countries, were to extend their co-operation. Three years ago the non-aligned countries established a news pool. At present ten non-aligned countries subscribe to the press agencies pool. In its present form, however, the non-aligned news agencies pool is no more than a mechanism for exchanging officially-sanctioned information or news handouts. I have in mind a third world news agency which will not be controlled by the governments of the developing countries, but would be independent. It will be free and professional. It will adhere strictly to the three virtues of truth, objectivity and accuracy.

Reforming The News Agencies

Mr. Chairman, I believe that as a rule, the four major news agencies of the West try to report the facts fairly and objectively. It is, however, inevitable that their perceptions of the facts are coloured by their own experiences, their own philosophies and their own value systems. The truth is like a mountain. How it looks depends on the perspective from which it is viewed. It would be desirable if the news agencies were to employ more local people in their bureaux overseas. It would also be desirable if the news agencies were to progressively replace expatriate bureaux chiefs with local personnel or with correspondents from other third world countries. To the extent that it is necessary to have expatriates as reporters and bureaux chiefs, it would be desirable if they were required to learn the local language and have an understanding of the local culture and history. In recent years, the great newspapers of the West have progressively reduced the number of their foreign correspondents. This is a regrettable development when the world is becoming more inter-dependent and there is a greater need for inter-cultural communication and understanding. In place of the resident foreign correspondents we, in the third world, see more and more reporters from the West who pay fleeting visits to our countries and who become instant experts. The result is that these correspondents sometimes file stories which are accurate as far as the facts go, but whose interpretations of the facts are often inadequate because of their failure to take into account the milieu, the ethos and the constraints of the developing countries.

A Plea for Balance, Objectivity and Accuracy

Mr. Chairman, it is true that the newspapers of the West generally give their readers an unbalanced picture of the third world. The third world is often caricatured as a region of pestilence, disease, corruption, coup d'état and economic failure. There are autocratic and oppressive regimes in the third world. In some countries in the third world, corruption is endemic. There are many cases of economic failures. But not all countries of the third world are oppressive, corrupt and economic failures. Some have made impressive progress in economic development. Some have surprisingly strong democratic institutions.

Some countries in the third world are as free and perhaps more free of corruption than some countries in the West. We are not asking the Western media to praise us when we deserve criticism. We ask only for balance, for objectivity and for accuracy.

Mr. Chairman, we have to be frank and admit that there are different schools of thought concerning the role of the press and the relationship between the journalist and society. In Western political philosophy the press should be free of government control. It has a right to report on anything, however controversial, so long as it does so truthfully, accurately and objectively. In Western political philosophy the freedom of the press is regarded as a fundamental human right as well as a right derived from the freedom of speech. The West believes that the correlative of press freedom is press responsibility but press responsibility is to be defined and regulated by the press itself not by the government.

In Marxist philosophy the press has a definite political role. Its role is to assist the revolution, to mobilise the people for the attainment of goals deemed desirable by the government and the party.

What is the position in the third world? The third world does not embrace a monolithic philosophy. There are some who share the views of the West, others adhere to the Marxist point of view. Still others are trying to evolve a philosophy of their own. What are some of the special problems faced by the third world? One special problem is that in many of these new nations issues such as language, religion and race are explosive. Let us suppose that a clash took place between two religious communities in a developing country. How should the press cover the story? If the press reports the clash truthfully, objectively, accurately, would the press be acting responsibly? This is a difficult question because on the one hand, we have an interest in informing people of the truth but on the other hand, we wish to prevent religious passions from being inflamed and to touch off an even greater conflagration. The content of the concept of press responsibility therefore must vary depending upon the circumstances of the society in question. A responsible press must interpret its responsibility in the light of the special circumstances of the society in which it works.

Another question is whether the press in the third world should, in addition to reporting news of human interest, also report development news. Does the press have a role to play in mobilising the people for the achievement of the country's development goals?

Mr. Chairman, we live in a world of harsh realities. It is one of the harsh realities of this world that the dissemination of information is dominated by four news agencies of the West and one of the East. The third world has none of comparable size or coverage because we are economically, technologically and professionally backward compared to the developed countries. The discrepancy between the developed and developing countries need not, however, be immutable. The third world can gradually bring itself up to the level of the developed countries. This requires hard work on our part. We have to give our journalists better training, we have to nurture not suppress our own mass communications media. It requires co-operation between developing countries. It also requires co-operation between the deve-

loping and the developed countries. I hope the developed countries will agree to assist us in the field of training, in the sharing of technology, in the production of cheap newsprint and in encouraging the mass media in the developed countries to give more ample, more balanced, more objective reporting of developments in the third world.

- (1) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation in the Third Committee on IMPORTANCE OF THE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL INCOME FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT — PROBLEMS OF THE ELDERLY AND AGED*

Madam Chairman, among the many social development issues facing nations and the international community today, one of the most pertinent and crucial questions is that involving the equitable distribution of national income and its effects on economic and social development.

Nearly eighteen years ago the UN proclaimed with much enthusiasm and fanfare, the First Development Decade dedicated to the elimination of poverty and the raising of standards of living through rapid economic growth. Since then the Second Development Decade has been launched and a Third is being contemplated.

Yet, Mankind, or a significant part of it, is in a sorry state. According to a 1977 ILO Report, more than 700 million people live in acute poverty and are destitute. Nearly 300 million persons are unemployed or underemployed. The Report gives other equally depressing figures — such as 460 million persons suffering from a severe of protein-energy malnutrition, the increase in the number of illiterate adults from 700 million in 1960 to 760 million towards 1970.

Economists and social planners are asking themselves why, in spite of all the prodigious efforts put in at the national level and the great amount of international aid and technical assistance rendered, poverty has not been eradicated and the standards of living of nearly a quarter of mankind shown no improvement. Instead one hears the continuous lament that the rich have grown richer while the abject conditions of the poor have worsened.

Comfort for this sorry state of affairs is sought in the explanation that, contrary to expectations, rapid economic growth by itself has failed to bring about an equitable distribution of national income and a consequent levelling of the social classes. Some eminent social scientists have argued that equitable distribution of national income is a pre-condition for socio-economic advancement and the abolition of poverty. They have suggested that enlarging the economic pie without eliminating political and socio-economic inequality will not significantly improve the material position of the less advantaged sections of the population.

These arguments sound like the proverbial chicken and the egg question. Should there be economic growth first followed by equitable distribution of national income or versa? Too often it is pointed out to developing societies that the developed countries have been able to distribute national income while engaging in rapid economic growth.

What is conveniently forgotten however is the fact that in the initial stages of economic growth in these countries disciplined efforts were made to provide the surplus needed for the accumulation of capital. Only when economic growth had generated sufficient national wealth did the distributive mechanism come into play.

Developing societies today are told that it is not necessary for them to undergo the trauma experienced by the advanced countries in their attempts to achieve economic growth. Instead—they are mesmerised into thinking that there is a soft option—that capital will accumulate automatically in the course of economic growth and that the more urgent consideration is the equitable distribution of such growth. Unfortunately this is not true. It remains a sad and unpalatable fact of life that without rapid economic growth and consequent accumulation of national wealth, there can be no pie to be shared, no wealth to be distributed. The solution therefore cannot be limited to more equitable distribution of existing resources. More wealth must be created.

However, this does not mean that the problems of income distribution and satisfaction of the basic needs of the people ought to be ignored or postponed during the early stages of economic growth. On the contrary, an effective development strategy should also include the non-economic factors of growth such as meeting the basic human needs for food, housing, health and health care, education and employment opportunities. Only if the people are convinced that they have a stake in the development process and an equitable share in the fruits of growth would they make the necessary sacrifice and efforts to lift themselves and aim towards a better quality of life. The function of governments should be to create new institutions and promote new values that would “galvanise, cajole, induce, and, in the last resort, compel men into action”.¹

It is my delegation's view that merely examining the importance of the equitable distribution of national income, where little exists anyway in the case of the poorer developing countries, is nothing more than an esoteric exercise. What should really be studied is a new mix of policy priorities that would act both as a catalyst for economic growth and meet the needs of the whole of our peoples. The varying degrees of success achieved by several developing countries suggest that this is not an impossible goal.

The Second Committee has, I believe, launched a study on a new International Economic Strategy. It would be incumbent on the part of this Committee to ensure that the social aspects of that strategy are adequately covered lest once again cries are raised that economic growth has been achieved at the expense of standards of living or social expectations.

I turn now to the question of the Aged and the Elderly. The process of ageing is as old as time itself. Yet, only in recent years has the problem acquired deep, political significance. This new-found concern for the Aged and their problems can be traced to two reasons. Firstly, as a result of the advances made in science and medicine, the

¹ Dr. Goh Keng Swee “The Economics of Modernisation” (Asia-Pacific Press), p. 35.

lifespan of the human population has gradually increased. Consequently, there are a greater number of elderly people around — 291 million persons 60 years and over (1970 figures). It is expected that by the year 2000, this figure would reach 354 millions. The presence and activities of such a significant sector of the world's population naturally raises a host of issues which hitherto were taken for granted. Secondly, the process of modernisation over the past few decades has brought, in its wake, several socially debilitating effects. One of these is the break-up of the traditional family system. In the old days the aged and the elderly were not only revered but occupied a position of special and social significance in the family. This reverence has disappeared in some societies while it is being slowly eroded in others.

Eastern societies generally subscribe to the virtues of filial piety and the obligation of the younger generation to look after the elders. However, it is a matter of great regret that today these virtues and obligations are in jeopardy in that part of the world too. My government, which is concerned over these emerging trends, has instituted several measures. Among these are:

- 1 appropriate income tax reliefs for wage-earners who support their aged parents
- 2 provision in the public housing policy to enable the elderly to live with their kith and kin in adjacent or nearby apartments. It has also encouraged the efforts of voluntary associations and societies which provide welfare services for the aged. These associations garner the support of the public and tap the generosity of the business houses and the philanthropic mindedness of the citizens. They have set up a number of Community Homes for the Aged. The notable feature of these Homes is that they are located in housing estates and the elders are surrounded by younger flat owners. Hence they are able to mix freely with their neighbours and a sense of isolation from the community is avoided.

This combination of Government and voluntary efforts have proved to be effective in meeting the welfare needs and care of the aged. By setting an example of its care and concern for the aged and the elderly the Government hopes to inculcate amongst the younger generation in the country, the traditional love, reverence and respect for the elderly.

The proposal for the proclamation of an International Year would serve the purpose of focussing the attention of the global community on the various issues concerning the elderly in our societies. However, taking into account the varying socio-cultural patterns, answers to these issues could best be found within each individual society or cultural milieu.

- (m) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation in the Fifth Committee, 29 September 1978 on SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS*

Mr. Chairman, I regret having to request for the floor once again this year on the item under discussion, namely on the Scale of Assessment. My country was one of the unfortunate member states from

the group of developing countries whose rate of assessment for the period 1977 to 1979 was increased by the Committee on Contributions. My delegation wishes to make a few observations, which I hope will be taken into consideration when the Committee on Contributions meets next year to draw up the new scale of assessment for the triennium 1980 to 1982.

As the Fifth Committee may recollect, my delegation made a brief statement last year. In it we put forward several reasons why we felt the Committee on Contributions should not have so drastically increased Singapore's rate of assessment for the period between 1977 and 1979. Aware of the need and virtues of brevity, I will not take up the time of this Committee with a recapitulation of those points. Suffice it to say that we have taken note of paragraph 58 of the Report of the Committee on Contributions as contained in Document No. 11 (A/33/11). The Committee indicated that it would, and I quote, "bear in mind the points raised in that representation in the formulation of the scale of assessment. Nevertheless my delegation remains extremely disappointed with the decision of the Committee on Contributions when it decided not to reduce our scale of assessment for 1978 and 1979.

In the hope that the Committee could be persuaded to be more sympathetic in the future in its assessment of Singapore's capacity to pay, I would like to introduce two additional arguments. Firstly, Mr. Chairman, we must not forget that the Report of the Committee on Contributions in 1976 noted that national income may be supplemented by net worth or wealth as a measurement of capacity to pay. I am aware that general applicability may not be feasible because data were only available for a few countries. Nonetheless this should not exclude its application in the case of Singapore where the merits of the wealth criterion is obvious. Information on my country's deficiency in net wealth is readily available. Since they were pointed out in our statement last year, I will not repeat them.

I do wish to state however, that deficiencies in wealth for Singapore invalidate the use of income criterion as the sole measure of ability to pay. For the information of the members of the Committee on Contributions, Singapore relies heavily on foreign capital, foreign technology and foreign workers. We are still in the transitional stage in the development of our economy. We are trying to maintain quantitative and qualitative growth but we have not yet successfully restructured our economy. Neither are we as yet capable of self-sustained growth. The gains which we have succeeded in achieving so far will therefore be offset by the increased contributions we will have to pay.

The criterion of national income, as used by the Committee on Contributions and as conventionally defined, which is on a residential basis, has not been a true reflection of the income of Singaporeans. The figures used by the Committee on Contributions to assess our rate of assessment were in fact grossly distorted by three factors. The first, involved the conversion of our national currency into the US dollar. It resulted in a value inflated by as much as 20% because of the appreciation of the Singapore dollar against the US dollar. The second factor was inflation which further inflated Singapore's national income in 1973 and 1974 by at least 3.6% as compared with the nominal world income.

The third and this is the second additional factor which my delegation would like to introduce in its statement today. It involves the distinction between national income per se and indigenous national income, the latter being a true reflection of the income of Singaporeans. My Government has calculated the share of income accruing to foreign workers and foreign owned enterprises. Our compilation was based on concepts, definitions and methodology given in the United Nations' publication entitled "A System of National Accounts, 1968". The indigenous per capita GNP as computed for the years 1973 and 1974 have also been evaluated and accepted by the International Monetary Fund. We have found that the share of compensation of employees and of the operating surplus as well as the compensation of fixed capital of establishments which accrues to foreigners and foreign owned enterprises amounted to as much as 15% in 1973 and 18% in 1974. Unfortunately this amount has in the past been recorded and included as part of our national accounts. The result was a picture which did not truly reflect our indigenous national income.

I will not take up the time of my distinguished colleagues in the Fifth Committee with an enumeration of those figures. Instead my Government will supply those statistical data to the Committee on Contributions at a later date.

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude my statement by reiterating what my delegation said last year. Singapore accepts the primary principle of collective responsibility. In general, the criterion of national income does afford a rough but useful standard for judging a country's capacity to pay. We further accept the fact that, as a developing country begins to achieve economic progress, it should be prepared to bear a greater share of the financial burden of the organization. However as my distinguished colleague from Japan said in his statement last year, there should also be a *reasonably differentiated and fair* burden sharing.

We feel that the figure 0.08% exaggerates Singapore's increased capacity to pay.

(n) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation on PERSONNEL QUESTIONS*

Mr. Chairman, I will not speak on the need to increase the number of female staff members in the UN Secretariat, particularly in the professional categories. I will not do so although I agree with J.I.U.'s report because the points I could have made have already been made by speakers before me. Nor will I speak on the sorry state of our observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. I hope the Secretary-General will take due note of the constructive suggestions and recommendations made here.

I am taking the floor today to speak on the question of staff recruitment and promotion standards and policies which should be of as much concern to member States as they are to the Secretariat. Too often, we forget that the item on personnel also deals with the following two important issues:

- 1) the basis upon which individual staff members are being recruited, assigned and advanced, and
- 2) the interests and well-being of the UN staff as a whole.

In his introduction to the Report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General stated, and I quote, "the UN should play a key role in the effort to find a working balance between national sovereignty and interest and international responsibility. To maintain these principles and to uphold them successfully, the Secretary-General and the Secretariat must frequently resist pressures from many quarters". My delegation fully endorses this ideal which must serve also as the main principle on which policies of UN staff recruitment and advancement should be based. However, we would be deluding ourselves if we believe that present UN staff management policies are being exercised with complete impartiality and in the collective interests of the UN Secretariat and member States as a whole.

My delegation feels there is a need once again to remind ourselves and the Secretary-General of our obligations under Article 101 of the United Nations Charter. We should not only speak out for the principle of Secretariat independence, we should also act in conformity with that principle. You may well ask, Mr. Chairman, why the reminder. It is because we believe that if the United Nations Organization is to function effectively, we need an efficient, impartial and competent Secretariat.

For this reason, we must upgrade the quality of personnel recruited by the UN and protect the integrity of the processes of recruitment and promotion. We must also develop a career service with reasonable prospects of advancement for individual staff members to the highest echelons of the Secretariat so that the best people would be attracted to serve in the UN Secretariat. The representatives of member States should stop interfering in the recruitment and promotion of Secretariat staff. It is perfectly legitimate for member States to identify talented candidates and present them for consideration to the Secretariat. Thereafter, they should refrain from exerting pressure or influence on the process of selection. It is also incumbent on the Secretary-General to resist such pressures and influence and to ensure that recruitments to the Secretariat and promotion are based exclusively on objective criteria and standards.

A two-pronged approach is required here. First, member States should not regard the United Nations as an extension of their home services. Positions in the United Nations Secretariat are not to be used as rewards. Neither should the United Nations Secretariat be used as a tool to further the national interests of member States.

Second, the Secretary-General must redouble his efforts to ensure that the UN Secretariat conforms to the 3 criteria laid down by the Charter: competence, efficiency and integrity. The Secretary-General must show courage and fortitude in resisting the pressures of member States on recruitment and promotion.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation observes that at present morale does not seem to be especially high among the UN Secretariat staff. In certain cases, people have been recruited from outside the Secretariat to fill positions which could have been filled just as well, if not better, by more experienced staff members already in the Secretariat. Then in other cases, not only are those brought in lacking in the necessary expertise, particularly if we consider recruitment in the technical field,

but in a few instances, these new staff members seem more concerned with promoting the interests of their national governments than those of the world community. In this regard, I would like to make the final comment that we have an obligation to recognize that it is in our collective interests to ensure that only persons who have distinguished themselves in the relevant field and who believe in the principles and purposes of the UN Charter occupy senior secretariat positions.

(o) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore Delegation in the Sixth Committee on review of the UN Charter*

Mr. Chairman, the United Nations Charter was signed on 26 June 1945 and came into force on 24 October 1945. It is almost 33 years since UN came into being. The World in 1945 was vastly different from that of today. Major changes have taken place in all fields of human endeavour: UN membership has grown almost three fold; technology has produced such marvels that what was science fiction not so long ago is a reality today; many wars were fought but many more were avoided. Also, during these years, we have experienced both abundance and scarcity of the resources required for human survival.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard in the last few days some eloquent and powerful arguments on the need to strengthen and revise the Charter in view of the changed circumstances. My delegation is of the view that if the provisions in the Charter have indeed become inadequate, and some of them even obsolete, to meet the changed situation then we must secure the necessary amendments. By way of analogy, we, as lawyers, are not unfamiliar with amendments effected to constitutions to meet new developments. However, we should guard against the temptation to change the law every time we face a problem. The move to seek changes in the law in order to find a solution to problem should be the last resort. Interpretation, imaginative application and good faith must all precede it.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is of the view that it is not fair to blame the Charter for all the UN's shortcomings. I am reminded of a statement made by a former British Permanent Representative to the UN, Lord Caradon. Once, when he was asked what was wrong with the UN, Lord Caradon replied, "I can't find anything wrong with the UN except its members!" There are, of course, imperfections in the Charter. No founding document of a human institution can be expected to be immutable. Therefore, what is needed is a hard-headed and realistic appraisal of the Charter and of the UN's shortcomings. We must clearly distinguish between those shortcomings which are directly attributable to the constraints of the Charter and other shortcomings which are the result of other factors. We must avoid the error of blaming all the ills of the UN on the Charter.

What we need more than any revision of the Charter is the political will of the member States to make the UN work. The will, I fear, Mr. Chairman, is lacking. Until we come to grips with this basic problem, no amount of amendments to the Charter, protocols, codification treaties, declarations or call them by any name you like, is going to give us satisfaction. Can we honestly say that if a treaty

prohibiting the use of force in the settlement of disputes between States is concluded today the world will be more peaceful tomorrow than it is today? Certainly not.

Year in year out we condemn in the UN the arms race that goes on. We have argued that, if only a tiny portion of the money spent on arms were diverted to peaceful and productive purposes, the world will be a better place. Yet how many of us, in this chamber, can with honesty any that we have done our best to persuade our own governments not to increase defence budgets, leave alone reducing them?

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is not citing these arguments to justify a case against any changes. That is not our position. The world has changed dramatically since the inception of UN. To the extent that provisions of the UN Charter have been rendered obsolete by these changes we are in favour of amending those provisions. To the extent that the shortcomings of our organisation are directly attributable to the constraints of the Charter, we are for removing those constraints. We are, however, against the self-deluding thesis that when the Charter is revised, all the shortcomings and ills of our organisation would disappear.

There are many other ways in which we can make the existing machinery work better. Mr. Chairman, in your preliminary address from the Chair on 25 September, you drew our attention to Rule 110 concerning congratulations to officers of the Bureau. Only a minority of delegations, my delegation included, have observed this Rule. We have listened to the numerous violations in this regard. If I remembered correctly, you also appealed to the delegates to attend meetings punctually. You went so far as to give us statistics on the cost of each of these meetings we are now having. Yet, we have not been able to get started until 25 to 30 minutes after the scheduled time. These matters may appear trivial, but I fear that they are symptomatic of the deep-seated malaise that seem to grip us as representatives of member States, and the UN Secretariat; we make repetitive speeches, and adopt meaningless resolutions which in turn invite or become the occasion for further resolutions later; these and other examples show how much energy and resources are wasted even within the framework of implementation of those parts of the Charter universally subscribed to. Ought we not, Mr. Chairman, demonstrate our concern for the effective realization of the ideals embodied in the UN system and its Charter by first throwing behind it the full weight of our combined political and ample resources. My delegation is aware of certain weaknesses of the UN structure, but even its available strength is not being maximised for the good of humanity because of our cynical or resigned attitudes. These are some of the thoughts of my delegation, Mr. Chairman, made in all, sincerity and frankness, and which I trust will contribute to consideration of this important agenda item.

(p) *UN General Assembly: 33rd Session 1978, Statement of the Singapore's Representative to the Sixth Committee, 10 November 1978, Mr. V.K. Rajan*

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for this opportunity to express the views of my delegation. My delegation associates itself

with the felicitations expressed by others before me concerning the good work done by the Commission. Elevation of Ambassador Sette Camara, Prof. Roberto Ago and Prof. Abdullah El-Erian to judgeship of the International Court of Justice is a fitting tribute for a job well done.

Taking the floor almost at the end of the debate on this item, I run the risk of repeating what many distinguished and eminent delegates have already said. Added to it, is the fact that we are already running behind our schedule. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I shall confine my intervention to only two issues. They are—succession of States in respect of matters other than treaties and the status of diplomatic courier and the diplomatic bag not accompanied by a diplomatic courier.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to state some observations of my delegation with regard to Articles 13, 15 in Part I: “Succession to State Property” and corresponding Articles 22 and 24 in Part II: “Succession to State Debts”. The position of my country is unique in that, in post UN period, there is no other example whereby a self governing State joined another independent State and later, within two years in fact, separated to become itself an independent State. Owing to constraint on time, I will not go into the details concerning the merger and the subsequent separation. Some reference to these could be found in pages 284 and 289 in the English text of the Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its Thirtieth Session (Document A/33/10).

Singapore became an independent State in 1965, in circumstances which are essentially the same as those of other newly independent States. In line with this position, Singapore has consistently adopted and observed the “clean state” principle in matters of State succession. I want to reiterate here that this was the position taken by my delegation at the United Nations Conference on Succession of States in respect of Treaties which was held in Vienna from July 31 to August 23, 1978.

On the question of the status of the diplomatic courier, and the diplomatic bag not accompanied by a courier, my delegation did not intervene when the topics were debated under agenda Item 116: Implementation of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961. However, my delegation has followed the views expressed with interest and had also considered in detail the nineteen issues identified by the ILC in Chapter VI of its Report which is now being debated. Mr. Chairman, Singapore finds herself in the same position of the many smaller newly independent States which have to entrust diplomatic bags to pilots of commercial air carriers. A protocol on the status of diplomatic courier, and the diplomatic bag not accompanied by a diplomatic courier, along the lines of the nineteen issues identified by the Commission may be of some help. However, I would hasten to add that my delegation is not convinced that a protocol, in itself, will solve all the problems in this regard. Nevertheless, my delegation would support the ILC working on these areas, if a majority of the member States would so wish.