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President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA  
(Algeria).

*Address by Mr. Giovanni Leone,  
President of the Italian Republic*

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Giovanni Leone, the President of the Italian Republic, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

2. Mr. LEONE (President of the Italian Republic):\* First of all I should like to express my profound satisfaction at the opportunity that has been given to me to address my greetings to this Assembly which is being guided by such an eminent personality as yourself, Mr. President, the illustrious representative of a country which has always shown a profound faith in United Nations ideals and with which Italy maintains cordial and friendly relations. I would also like to thank you for your welcome. I consider it a great privilege to be able to convey the greetings and good wishes of my country to this Organization on which the interests of the world are fixed. Towards you and towards the United Nations are directed the expectations, the anxieties, the aspirations, the torments and the delusions of all the people of the world. Towards you are directed above all the hopes of our young people and I ask you to allow me to speak for them because I have spent 40 years teaching in Italian universities. These young people who are looking towards you are students, workers and indeed young people of every class, who often feel themselves cut off, deprived and stripped of every ideal and are anxiously seeking new expectations and new ideals. This is certainly the highest ideal that can be offered to the youth of the world: the organization of all the countries of the world brought together to strive for peace.

\* Mr. Leone spoke in Italian. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

to settle disputes and to lay the foundation for a more equitable distribution of wealth and for greater justice among peoples. I believe that the renewal of these ideals of the United Nations will be useful for all communities but especially for those of young people. I would venture to point out that the United Nations embodies two aspects of an ideal and cultural tradition of my country: firstly, the sense of nationality or the respect for the sovereignty of countries based on their own national characteristics—a fundamental principle established by the great Italian jurist Pasquale Stanislao Mancini—and secondly, the sense of internationalism, of a meeting of countries in a vast community, in a great Organization.

3. To recount to you the history of the results achieved in almost 30 years of the activity of the United Nations seems to me not only superfluous but disrespectful. It is a history that we must describe realistically and courageously to the peoples of the world and we must inform them not only of the successes but also of our bitter thoughts at the delays and failures that have occurred. But certainly one result has been achieved: the spectre of a new world tragedy has been gradually disappearing from the world. We do not disregard the contribution, decisive at times, made in this respect by many bilateral and multilateral sources. However, even in the case of events which have been concluded or developed outside the United Nations, allow me to say, in a tribute to your work, that these events are the fruit of the spirit of the United Nations and often are also the fruit of its meetings and of the opportunities for understanding, agreement, dialogue and discussion which the United Nations provides for representatives of all the countries of the world.

4. One important problem which is in the forefront of your preoccupations is disarmament. Here I would like to recall what the Italian Foreign Minister, Mr. Moro, stated in this Hall when he outlined the strategy for peace. This strategy for peace requires patience, reflection, sacrifice and above all the determination never to relax our efforts. The world has become too small for its security to be confined to certain regions. Hence it is both necessary and useful to maintain close relations between countries for the solution of these problems. It is truly bewildering and frightening that in this century, particularly in recent years, we see, in contrast to the prodigious developments of science and technology, the re-emergence of attempts to use fear, violence, cruelty, inhumanity and terrorism.

5. But if certain initial results have been achieved in the efforts to avert the danger of a world tragedy, we must at the same time look upon other events, being aware that our efforts have been unsuccessful at times. If we think of the Middle East problem,

the Cyprus crisis and the conflicts that persist in South-East Asia, it becomes increasingly necessary for all Members of the United Nations to act effectively in the search for solutions to these political problems, which are serious also because of the human losses they involve.

6. As I think of the basic role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace, I feel I should turn my thoughts with reverence and emotion to all those, including many Italians, who have sacrificed their lives in carrying out the assignments given them by the United Nations. They are true citizens of the world because they have placed themselves in the service of a universal ideal and they are the true expression of that collective conscience of mankind which turns towards you and brings before you its anguished demands.

7. I have added faith in the validity of the United Nations as I observe its growing response to the need for discussions, studies and regulations which continually emerge at a time of such rapid change. I refer in particular to the need to achieve economic and social progress.

8. Representatives in this Assembly and in the organizations of the United Nations firmly are becoming increasingly convinced that they must make a massive and creative effort to establish a new and more just order to meet the economic and social needs of the world's peoples. To this end, I would like to recall the most recent initiatives taken in the search for solutions to the problems of raw materials and development, the economic rights and duties of States, the utilization of the world's resources and the problem of food and world hunger. Quite recently, the Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim, spoke out as the legitimate and effective interpreter of these urgent and often dramatic needs, inviting the nations of the world to make a more generous contribution. And having mentioned the name of Mr. Waldheim, I would like to pay him a special tribute of homage and sympathy. The field of action which opens up before us is immense; this constitutes a veritable challenge for our time.

9. I must also stress what your Organization has achieved in order to secure the universal recognition of basic human rights and of the liberation of peoples. Among the most important results attained we must mention the self-determination and emancipation of peoples, which has proved, as the United Nations had already proclaimed, not to favour one country or to be against another country, but to serve mankind as a whole, the advancement of peoples, the free development of the individual, the recognition of national sovereignty, and the exaltation of the independence and freedom of the human spirit.

10. All this gives us comfort and hope. And credit must be given to all those connected with the United Nations, beginning with the Secretary-General to whom I have just paid a tribute.

11. Italy has always made an active, intense, enthusiastic and responsible contribution to the activities of the United Nations. Allow me to recall with pride the period in which the presidency of the General Assembly was held by one of the most eminent Italian politicians, Mr. Fanfani [*twentieth session*].

This contribution has always given us an opportunity to continue, advance and strengthen that internationalism that I mentioned at the beginning of this brief address to the United Nations. The Italian Constitution, in whose elaboration I took part as a member of the Italian Assembly which adopted it, has established two basic principles: the repudiation of war as an instrument of solving disputes between peoples and the possibility of limiting national sovereignty as a direct means of eliminating conflicts and, above all, of bringing peoples together in the search for peace.

12. In following this tradition, which is also a tradition of thought and of the culture of the country which I have the honour of representing here, I pledge the unremitting and active participation of Italy in the work and progress of the United Nations and I express the hope that you, Mr. President, the United Nations and this Assembly will be able to work with ever-increasing enthusiasm and constructive action in the interest of peace and fraternity among peoples.

13. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank His Excellency the President of the Italian Republic for the important statement he has just made.

*Mr. Siclair (Haiti), Vice-President, took the Chair.*