

which had developed, to terminate its administration, and with the desire of the Indonesian people to achieve their territorial unity—a unity drawn from historical circumstances. It also recognizes and provides for the exercise of the right of the indigenous people to a real and effective opportunity, to decide for themselves their future, both in the form of government and from the point of view of international association and to be equipped in the meantime for the making of that decision. No doubt, in reaching that Agreement neither party obtained what it regarded as the optimum in the matter of timing and in the details of the modalities of transfer, nor in the precise expression of the obligations assumed. In substance, however, the Agreement does cover the essentials I have mentioned. Australia has been concerned to see the dispute peacefully resolved in such a manner that the claims of the Papuan people are both recognized and provided for. Whatever reservations we may have had as to the course of events prior to the making of the Agreement, Australia accepts the parties' Agreement as I have described it.

222. May I add that I believe that, quite apart from the moral considerations involved in the principle of self-determination, the long-term interests of stability and progress in the region and of relations between the peoples, will be served by a bona fide performance of the self-determination provisions of the Agreement.

223. Australia looks to the United Nations to perform its proper functions under the Agreement, and to Indonesia to place the welfare of the Papuans above all other considerations in its administration of the Territory—whatever the proper status of the Territory in relation to the Charter may be—a matter into which there is no present need to enter. Having achieved its principle of national unity by now completing the transfer to its own administration of all those Territories which formerly formed part of the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia has now undertaken as its own act and as an expression of its national will to afford the indigenous population self-determination in the sense I have mentioned.

224. Indonesia in its administration, and the Acting Secretary-General in carrying out the functions of the United Nations, will find Australia ready to co-operate in the achievement of the purposes of this Agreement. The ending of this dispute opens possibilities of greater co-operation among all the nations of the region in fields other than those related directly to New Guinea, and this is a prospect which Australia greatly welcomes.

225. Mr. PELAEZ (Philippines): I am highly honoured to place on record my Government's profound gratification at the peaceful settlement of the West Irian question embodied in the Agreement which we have just formally recognized in this General Assembly of the United Nations. This Agreement brings to an amicable end a most difficult and stubborn dispute which had defied solution for thirteen years and had been of deep concern to the United Nations, particularly to the Member countries from South-East Asia. Great stakes were involved and at times the issue of war or peace hung in the balance. The Agreement solemnized by this august body today required an exceptional amount of patient effort, forbearance and statesmanship of a high order on the part of all concerned. It has been aptly described as an historic achievement by the two dedicated men whose intervention contributed greatly to its realization, the Secre-

tary-General of the United Nations and Mr. Bunker of the United States. Lasting credit is due, both to the Republic of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for persevering in the face of the most formidable difficulties in their efforts at conciliation, which finally succeeded in resolving these difficulties and producing a mutually acceptable agreement.

226. The part played by the United Nations and its decisive contribution as mediator in the dispute is known to us all. Not as well known, but I dare say likewise deserving of credit and commendation, are the moderating influence and the disinterested assistance of friendly nations in facilitating the peaceful settlement of the question. The Philippines is proud to count itself among those nations.

227. While we supported the position of Indonesia in this dispute, in accordance with our commitments under the Bandung Declaration, we earnestly urged that every effort be exercised for peaceful settlement and helped in our own modest way to keep open the channels of communication between the disputants, particularly during the more difficult moments. We in the Philippines have special reasons to feel gratified over the peaceful settlement of the West Irian question. First, we are neighbours and kinsmen of the Indonesian people, linked closely to them by enduring ties of amity, historical experience and a common devotion to freedom and peace. It is understandable that we should rejoice with them in the conclusion of this Agreement, which marks to our mind another forward step towards the liquidation of the remaining vestiges of colonialism in our part of the world. The Philippines looks forward to the early completion of this historical process, when all existing pockets of colonialism everywhere in the world will have been eliminated. Secondly, we have a vital stake in the peace and stability of South-East Asia. This Agreement removes a serious threat to that peace and paves the way to greater stability in that important area. Finally, we share with like-minded Member countries an abiding interest in the continuing effectiveness of the United Nations. This Agreement strengthens our faith in the efficacy of the United Nations as an instrument for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Where the essential ingredients of sincerity, mutual accommodation and genuine respect for the Charter are present, differences can always be reconciled peacefully.

228. I would like to conclude these brief remarks with an expression of the best wishes of the Government and people of the Philippines for the successful implementation of the Agreement on West Irian. We are prepared to give whatever useful and positive contribution we may be able to make to the immediate task of effecting an orderly transfer of the Territory under United Nations auspices. Beyond that we are prepared to co-operate fully with our neighbour and sister Republic in the common task of enlarging the freedom and enriching the lives of the peoples in our part of the world within the framework of the United Nations and the principles for which it stands.

229. Dato' ISMAIL (Federation of Malaya): The Agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands on the future of West Irian should be welcomed by all of us. For many years the West Irian dispute has been a source of discord and conflict, and in recent months has even threatened to explode into open war with potentially devastating consequences to the general peace of South-East Asia.