

VIETNAM

It is deeply discouraging that no tangible progress has been made towards a negotiated settlement in Vietnam. The high hopes universally aroused by the initiation of the talks in Paris reflected the overwhelming desire of mankind to see this agonizing and destructive conflict brought to an end.

While it is appropriate that this body should be concerned with the situation in Vietnam, responsibility rests in the final analysis with the two sides to the conflict. Canada has already expressed the view that the bombing of North Vietnam should stop. This is an essential first step. But a political settlement requires a general military de-escalation, and North Vietnam must demonstrate its willingness to contribute to this process.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

We are often reminded that the United Nations is a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations. One of the main threats to such harmony is racial discrimination and the effects it has on international stability. The divisions amongst the membership which these questions provoke must not be allowed to lead to a breakdown in communication between us. The object is clear: it is to ensure that the majority of the peoples of the countries of Southern Africa will no longer be deprived of their rightful place in the political, economic and social development of their countries.

The main issues are the future of South West Africa and Rhodesia, the question of apartheid in South Africa, and the refusal of the Government of Portugal to accept the overwhelming opinion of this Assembly in favour of self-determination for the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea. In all four situations, minority groups have decided that they alone have the right to determine for an indefinite period the rate of progress and the capacity to govern of the unenfranchised majority. These inequities must be ended. The process of peaceful change must be accelerated.

But how? We are all looking for some way out of the present impasse over South West Africa. At the twenty-second session of the Assembly, the Canadian representative suggested that the Assembly explore the offer made by the Foreign Minister of South Africa to receive a personal representative of the Secretary-General, without prejudice to any position which may have been taken by members of this organization. We still hope that this approach can be followed up. We are prepared to consider other approaches if they command a wide measure of agreement and if they are realistic.

We have agreed on the principles of United Nations action against Rhodesia. We must do everything possible to see that these decisions are carried out by all states, and especially by South Africa and Portugal. We must continue also to confront these two states with our unanimous judgment that policies of racial repression and political subjugation are incompatible with United Nations principles. Canada respects and intends to abide by the decisions of the Security Council.