

to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of the choice of member states of the United Nations. It is our further hope and intention that the discussions of this question, which in our view has considerable substantive content, will not be confined to its procedural aspects."

It is clear from the statements made on this item that while many delegations share the views of my Government that the International Court should be permitted to play an increasingly important role in the peaceful settlement of disputes, other delegations prefer to stress other means of peaceful settlement of disputes. This would seem to be fully in accord with Article 33 of the Charter, which explicitly provides that the means of peaceful settlement are open to the choice of the member states of the United Nations. It could hardly be otherwise, when, as has been pointed out by many distinguished delegates, the United Nations is founded upon the principle of sovereign equality of nations. Some member states may prefer negotiation, some may prefer inquiry followed by negotiation, some may prefer mediation, some conciliation, others arbitration, still others judicial settlement, and others resort to regional agencies or arrangements. What is proposed by the co-sponsors of L.507, is that an examination be made of the whole complex of procedures open to member states to settle their disputes peacefully, with a view to enhancing and further developing these procedures, and, perhaps, of developing new ones, such as the fact-finding function often carried out by the United Nations, and as proposed by the distinguished representative of the Netherlands.

I wish to make it quite clear, however, so that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind on this issue, where the preference of my Government lies. I am not now speaking in my capacity as co-sponsor of Resolution L.507, and it may be that other co-sponsors and other supporters or potential supporters