

In these circumstances we warmly welcome the generous initiative of His Majesty King Saud because clearly His Majesty's main interest has been to ease undesirable tensions between two neighbouring states. It would be our view that the distinguished ruler of a third Middle Eastern state could effectively lend good offices to a situation of this kind. It would be entirely consistent with the Charter of the United Nations if the Syrian complaint, which has brought into sharp focus serious charges and counter-charges, as between Syria and Turkey, were to be dealt with through regional processes. If we interpreted his remarks correctly, we understood the distinguished representative of Afghanistan to express the same view in his thoughtful and welcome statement of October 22. We have no doubt that this opinion is shared by many other delegations in this Assembly.

The Assembly should note with approval, we suggest, the repeated assurances and practical demonstration that the Government of Turkey has been fully prepared to accept the worthy offer of King Saud. It is surely incumbent on all member states to explore fully all channels of negotiation, mediation, conciliation or other peaceful means for resolving their differences. As we see it, the Government of Turkey has acted in accordance with its Charter obligations in the response to the initiative of His Majesty King Saud. We have been informed that this offer still stands. We hope we are right in assuming that the Government of Syria has not rejected it. The Canadian Delegation joins with others who have urged the Syrian authorities to weigh carefully the advantages of accepting the offer. Because of the uncertainties of the moment, we believe that the Assembly should be prepared to consider as well other means of dealing with the situation. In consultation with other delegations, and in the light of views expressed during this debate, we have reached some conclusions about a possible course of action.

If, for whatever reason, the parties are unable to agree to avail themselves of this regional process for settling the present matter, there are other means, as implied in the Charter. Several speakers in this debate have suggested that the Secretary-General, acting within the scope of the responsibilities given to him in the Charter, might be able to assist the parties to reconcile their differences and in this way to bring about an easing of tension, a situation of quiet. We have no hesitation in supporting that suggestion and in commending it to the Assembly and to the parties concerned.

In doing so, we have no wish to circumscribe the kind of action which the Secretary-General might take to achieve the aims I have mentioned. With the goodwill and co-operation of those most concerned and in the relaxed atmosphere which should prevail now that the situation has been fully aired in the Assembly, the Secretary-General should be able to make a helpful contribution.