

It gives me pleasure to welcome you in Egypt, the bastion of liberation struggle, steadfastness and resistance. Egypt has always welcomed all activists from all peace-loving peoples and freedom fighters who seek the right to self-determination. Egypt has always raised high the banners of struggle against exploitation, racism, imperialism and colonialism.

I convey greetings to you as you hold your fifth conference on the 14th anniversary of the first Afro-Asian peoples' solidarity conference. Its first session was in Cairo between December 26, 1957 and January 1, 1958, a memorable occasion in the history of our people's struggle.

At that time the representatives of the peoples of the two large continents of Africa and Asia assembled their common heritage and common aspirations linked them together. This conference was an outstanding landmark and a decisive step of the Afro-Asian peoples' struggle against imperialism, struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and fascism.

This first historical conference demonstrated the force organising the peoples' solidarity. It proved their determination to attain independence, and closed their

ranks to strengthen the solidarity which will never weaken. It also served to preserve the independence attained by our peoples after bitter struggle.

As I congratulate you on the wide strides which the African and Asian peoples have achieved after their independence, I express our support to the peoples who are still suffering from the collusion of imperialist and colonialist plots engineered against their freedom. I assert the support of the government and people of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the peoples of Indochina, in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, who are heroically resisting American imperialism for its flagrant defiance of all cultural values and its violation of these peoples' rights for freedom and self-determination.

I also confirm our support for the peoples of southern Africa who are struggling against the fascist and racist repression practised by the ruling minority regimes which collaborate with imperialism and aggressive military pacts.

I assert our firm support for the peoples of the Portuguese colonies in their struggle against Portuguese imperialism which still practices the concepts of the Middle Ages, and which, at the same time, persecutes freedom fighters by means of repression and modern weapons of destruction.

I convey greetings to all those struggling peoples and announce support for them — support which spares no efforts or sacrifices however expensive.

In close connection to the struggle being waged in the two great continents of Africa and Asia, the Egyptian and Arab peoples have escalated their struggle against the Zionist imperialist plots. These reached their climax with the 1967 aggression, seizing Arab land and attempting to destroy the national unity of the countries of the area, by striking at the Arab revolution and the revolutionary and liberation tide throughout the world.

But, our peoples' firm and determined stance in face of this conspiracy and the full-hearted support extended by your peoples and by all peace and justice-loving forces in the world have succeeded in defeating the far-reaching objectives of the Zionist imperialist scheme. This has enabled us today to declare our firm determination to liquidate the consequences of this scheme by liberating the land and restoring the rights, whatever the sacrifices and cost may be. This is not only our legitimate right but it is our sacred duty towards our country and towards our peoples and the friendly peoples who share with us the belief in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism.

Israel has unmasked its racist and aggressive nature and its expansionist aims. Thus, the support for our just struggle has increased, day after day. This conference, representing the peoples of Asia and Africa, held in Egypt at this decisive phase of our history confirms that we all believe in the unity of struggle throughout the two continents against the forces of oppression, evil and aggression.

The victories which we have achieved are great, but the duty which we still have to perform is hard. We have high hopes that the aims of the solidarity movement will be realised. We have faith in ultimate victory however difficult the road may be and however great the sacrifices. We are determined to pursue our struggle to the very end.

As I emphasise the necessity of strengthening the links between the forces of liberation in the Afro-Asian world and the forces of socialist countries, I pay tribute to the great assistance rendered by the friendly socialist camp to the Afro-Asian struggle. I wish to stress the importance of solidarity of all anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist forces.

I wish your conference every success. I am fully confident that we are all proceeding to victory over the forces of evil and aggression for the achievement of freedom, progress and peace.