



*President:* Mr. Imre HOLLAI (Hungary).

*Address by His Majesty King Olav V of Norway*

1. The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will hear an address by His Majesty King Olav V of Norway, whom, on behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome and to invite to address the Assembly.

2. King OLAV V (Norway): It is a pleasure for me once more to have an opportunity to address the United Nations. When I last spoke to the General Assembly, in 1975, at the thirtieth session [2381st meeting], the international community was enjoying a period of relative peace and hope. The year 1975 was that of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. East-West relations had taken a more positive course than in any other period since the Second World War. The General Assembly had just adopted the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)].

3. At this juncture there are fewer reasons for optimism. We are living through difficult times. The political and economic situation in the world is characterized by increased tension and uncertainty, the effects of which are clearly felt also by the United Nations itself. There seems to be an increasing perception that the United Nations has great difficulties in fulfilling its tasks and that better solutions can perhaps be found outside the United Nations. This perception serves to diminish the effectiveness of the Organization at a time when it is most needed.

4. Technological development has brought us tremendous progress in many fields, but it has also brought terrible weapons of destruction. Thus the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world for a better future are increasingly intermingled with fear and anxiety for what the future may bring. These attitudes were strongly expressed in connection with this summer's twelfth special session on disarmament.

5. In spite of some positive results, the session was not able to agree on a comprehensive programme for disarmament. It did, however, confirm the Programme of Action of the first special session on disarmament [see resolution S-10/2], which drew up the course for the future. We must never tire in our efforts to promote global stability and disarmament, and all Member States should realize their responsibility for the achievement of these objectives within the framework of the United Nations as well as in the important negotiations on arms control and disarmament going on elsewhere.

6. In his thoughtful report to the current session of the General Assembly [A/37/1], the Secretary-General stresses the problems we are faced with in the United Nations. An increasing number of countries has resorted to the use of force to solve bilateral disputes. Regrettably, the whole process of the peaceful settlement of disputes prescribed in the Charter of the United Nations seems less respected today than in earlier years. The territorial integrity and political independence of several countries have been violated. Regional wars have led to widespread destruction and immense human suffering.

7. The Secretary-General recommends that as an important first step Member States undertake a serious recommitment to the Charter. I should like to assure the Secretary-General that the whole-hearted commitment made to the United Nations in 1945 by the Government and people of Norway is as valid today as ever before. Furthermore, there is strong support in Norway for the urgent task of reconstructing the concept in the Charter of collective action for peace and security so as to render the United Nations more capable of carrying out its primary function. The smaller nations in particular need the protection and support of the United Nations. We should therefore be the first to defend the principles of the Charter.

8. The principles and obligations contained in the Charter are as sound and valid today as they were 37 years ago. They are the very basis for the maintenance of international peace; they are the foundation for the orderly conduct of relations among States; and it is essential that they be followed scrupulously and loyally.

9. The peoples of the world look to the United Nations to uphold these fundamental principles. It is sometimes overlooked that the United Nations has not been vested with power to enforce its principles. The United Nations can only act in accordance with the wishes of its Members. If the efficiency and the authority of the United Nations are undermined, it is we the Member States of the United Nations which are the losers.

10. It is also a fundamental purpose of the United Nations to promote international co-operation for economic development and respect for human rights. As long as the majority of the world's population lives in poverty there can be no stable or real peace. It is important therefore that the United Nations play a leading role in the process of promoting economic development.

11. The world community is living through a deep economic recession which affects us all. The developed countries are experiencing mass unemployment on a scale unprecedented since the 1930s. The trend towards gradual improvement of the living conditions

of the broad masses of the third world has been halted and in many cases reversed. Despite the continuous advance of modern science and technology, poverty and hunger are again on the increase. This represents a challenge to all of us, and particularly to the industrialized countries. What is called for in this situation is increased economic co-operation among States. Here the United Nations has a key role to play. The concept of global negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations is a constructive initiative in this direction. It is to be hoped that such negotiations can be launched at an early date. At the same time we must maintain and support the various United Nations assistance programmes, some of which are today seriously threatened by the decline in financial support.

12. In our efforts to bring about development it is important that we keep in mind the goal we are striving for—that is, to make it possible for the peoples of the world to live a life of freedom and dignity. The United Nations has made a unique contribution to the development of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Cove-

nant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights should guide us in our relations with our fellow human beings.

13. The United Nations was founded almost 40 years ago in recognition of the need for international co-operation. Since then the advances of science and technology have brought us all closer together. We have also come to recognize that the resources of the world are not unlimited and that the actions of individual nations affect other nations and the world as a whole. Our response today, therefore, should not be to turn to nationalism and isolation. On the contrary, we should increase our international co-operation. The United Nations is the universal organization established for this purpose. We should all make better use of it.

14. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank His Majesty King Olav V of Norway for the important address he has just given.

*The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.*