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Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 October 1985, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. DE PINIÉS

(Spain)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Address by Mr. Julio Garrett Aillon, Vice-President of the Republic of Bolivia

Statements were made by:

Mr. Harding (Jamaica)

Mr. Barrow (Belize)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda item 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): This afternoon the Assembly will hear a statement by the Vice-President of the Republic of Bolivia, His Excellency Mr. Julio Garrett Aillon.

Mr. Julio Garrett Aillon, Vice-President of the Republic of Bolivia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Vice-President of Bolivia, His Excellency Mr. Julio Garrett Aillon. I invite him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. GARRETT AILLON (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all I should like to express to you, Sir, the satisfaction of the Bolivian Government at your election as President of the General Assembly. It is a tribute to you and to Spain, which is so close to the heart of Latin America.

I should also like to express the profound feeling of national gratitude Bolivia feels with regard to the vigorous activities undertaken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, to bring about international understanding of our problems. That attitude is coupled with the outstanding qualities he has demonstrated in the exercise of his office and in the fulfilment of his great responsibilities.

My country earlier expressed its great grief at the catastrophe Mexico has suffered, and I should like to reiterate our sympathy, solidarity and fraternal support to that great brother nation.

I have come to this rostrum to pay a tribute to the United Nations on its fortieth anniversary. Bolivia was present at its inception and helped to bring it into being as an expression of the deep desire for peace felt by a world that had

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

just emerged from the agonies and destruction of war. Now we are here to join our voice, however modest it may be, in support of the spirit that prevailed at San Francisco and that, to the small nations of the world, represents the concrete embodiment of the principle of the legal equality of all States, with respect to which we associated ourselves yesterday, not to be the instrument of the strong but rather the voice of the weak and defenceless of the earth.

Here I should like for a moment to touch upon the work and contribution made by a group of enlightened young Bolivian diplomats who in 1945 were committed to the ideals of the Bolivian national revolution and who signed the United Nations Charter. We pay tribute to them and we should like to do so in the person of Ambassador Carlos Salamanca, who is present at this fortieth session of the General Assembly once again as a member of the Bolivian delegation. He has grown older in his outstanding services to the Organization and to Bolivia during 15 of the Assembly's 40 sessions.

American law contributed decisively to the inclusion in the Charter of new concepts of collective security and self-defence in Chapter VIII, which deals with the regional settlement of disputes. Bolivian law also had an influence on the drafting of the Charter by expanding the bases of international relations, contributing to bringing about the inclusion in the rather cold reference to treaties the concept of international justice that appears in paragraph 3 of the preamble and in Article 14, thus rooting in the foundations of the Organizations the principle that underlies Bolivia's maritime concerns.

Bolivia for the first time supported recognition of the right of peoples freely to control their natural resources, and I can say with pride that my country also sponsored the first resolution adopted by the United Nations dealing with the rejection of racial discrimination, a principle that we reiterate today as we renew

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

our total condemnation of apartheid and our unswerving support for the emancipation of Namibia under the auspices of the United Nations.

Bolivia, as a founding Member of the United Nations, wishes at this anniversary session to reaffirm the obligations it has contracted under the Charter and to reiterate its total commitment to the purposes and principles contained therein.

The defence of national sovereignty, the right of peoples to self-determination and the principle of non-intervention are a guarantee of our national dignity, the sole reliable guarantee upon which our independence rests and to which we can have recourse in order not to be in thrall to the great Powers.

We Bolivians will not allow any foreign interest to dictate the conduct of our country. Only Bolivians, and they alone, are entitled to correct our errors, change our course or determine our future.

Bolivia was the first Latin American country invited to participate in the Non-Aligned Movement. In our view non-alignment is not some negative neutrality; instead, it is the most rigorous and consistent adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and a militant conviction that impels to adopt an uncompromising position vis-à-vis the great world Powers.

My Government's international policy is based on those postulates. We share the concern for rigorous respect for our political independence, our territorial integrity, our right to live free from coercion. We cannot agree with the proposition that there exists a hierarchy of sovereignty, and we are actively opposed to the arms race, which must be eliminated in order to avoid a world confrontation that could reduce the planet to dust and rubble.

The Non-Aligned Movement is vigilant with regard to justice and equity in international relations. It has spoken out with a frequency appropriate to each case, calling for the righting of historic wrongs, and with particular emphasis on

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

matters affecting the vital functioning of States. It is in that framework that the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement have expressed constant solidarity with Bolivia's cause in its efforts to recover a sovereign and useful outlet to the Pacific Ocean.

Bolivia, because of its geographical situation in the centre of South America, is affected by three of the continent's hydrographic basins. It is the contact country for the five republics that border it. This geographical position thus makes it essential for Bolivia to have an outlet to the Pacific. Bolivia became an independent republic in 1825, and at that time my country had a coast over which it exercised full sovereignty for more than half a century. It was subsequently deprived of that outlet by a war of conquest. Never has it waived, nor will it renounce, its right to an outlet to the sea and to a full return to the community of nations.

It relies on the solidarity of the international community. The countries members of the Organization of American States (OAS) have over the last six years reiterated that

"it is a matter of standing hemispheric interest to find an equitable solution whereby Bolivia may obtain a sovereign and useful access to the Pacific Ocean."

I wish to take this opportunity to thank from this rostrum the 130 countries throughout the world that have given Bolivia their support, solidarity and fraternal understanding in its maritime quest.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

However, Bolivia now wishes to look to the future and to leave behind an unfortunate period, opening instead a new page of peace and understanding. Guided by this intention, it reiterates its traditional openness to dialogue with Chile within the context of the exhortations and resolutions of the Organization of American States (OAS) and with a minimum of preconditions being set by the parties as a guarantee of a bona fide willingness to reaching a practical settlement which, while having due regard for the reciprocal interests of the countries concerned, will not put Bolivia's territorial heritage at stake.

Bolivia proclaims its support for all multilateral means of solving disputes, faithful as it is to the principles of the Charter, without prejudice to the usefulness of bilateral solutions. We feel that the bilateral and multilateral options are not mutually exclusive but can be used in conjunction.

During a period that was not as marked as today is by a balance of terror and a threat of nuclear destruction, President Victor Paz Estenssoro stated when addressing the General Assembly in 1963:

"We must advance towards the total prohibition of nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament until finally we get to the point of outlawing war." (A/PV.1252, p. 11)

He also stated on that occasion that the great Powers appeared to rely on force rather than on the law.

In taking stock of the 40 years of the work of the United Nations, we observe that that warning is still valid. It is necessary for all Member States to make a decisive contribution to a campaign of disarmament to bring about peace and ensure the survival of mankind. The resources now devoted to the arms race should be freed in order to raise the standards of living of the great majority of peoples still struggling with backwardness, ignorance and hunger.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

Every twenty-four hours the world squanders approximately \$2,140 million on the arms race. It is impossible to calculate the amount of suffering, insecurity and poverty that any of the poor countries in the world could be spared by the use of such a sum of money. It is even harder to imagine the amount of pain, destruction and death that such a sum of money could unleash upon the earth. When one thinks of this terrible and horrifying reality, the most frightful thing of all is the lack of moral awareness on the part of those who gamble with the hunger of peoples and the survival of mankind.

A feeling of insecurity has been created by the instability resulting from the foreign interference in Central America. My Government considers that the causes of this lengthy crisis are to be found in unjust economic and social structures, and that the increasing militarization of the area has further aggravated the crisis. Bolivia commends the work carried out by the countries of the Contadora Group in seeking to reach peacefully negotiated solutions through the Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. Bolivia undertakes to help in ensuring that this instrument will guarantee the security of the region within a framework of self-determination and the application of the principle of non-interference in internal affairs.

My Government reiterates its support for the cause of the Republic of Argentina with regard to the recovery of its sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, and it expresses its concern over the deployment of nuclear weapons on those islands in violation of existing treaties. As has been stated at various times, Bolivia is in favour of a peacefully negotiated solution of the dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom through the good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

My country has noted with interest the proposals presented by the Soviet Union

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

to curb the arms race and bring about collective efforts for the elimination of wars and local conflicts. Similarly, it believes that the wide-ranging proposals presented by the United States help to improve the climate of the negotiations to be held between the major Powers so as to reach an agreement that will strengthen strategic stability and ensure deterrence through the achievement of an equitable and lasting agreement.

My Government rejects any intervention or military occupation by foreign forces whenever it may occur. Accordingly it condemns the military occupation of the territories of Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Cyprus and Lebanon and it reiterates its support for the actions of the Secretary-General in that regard.

Similarly, my country is concerned over the persistence of tensions and confrontations in areas of conflict in the Middle East. My Government supports the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; likewise, it recognizes Israel's right to have secure and recognized boundaries. It also urges Iran and Iraq to cease hostilities and to begin a process of pacification under the auspices of the United Nations.

Recalling that one of the fundamental concepts of the United Nations is universality, my country supports the view that it is advisable that both Koreas become Members of the United Nations and expresses its gratification at the resumption of talks between them.

The Government of Bolivia fully shares the concern of the international community concerning the pressing need to prevent and punish the illegal production, trade and use of illicit drugs, which represent a threat to public health and particularly to the health of the young. With the same determination, sense of responsibility and courage as my Government demonstrated as soon as it came to office in dealing with the economic and political realities in my country,

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

it has now begun to use all the resources within its scope to wage a frontal war on the drug trade, with all the moral strength of its conviction that we must prevent the degradation of the dignity and worth of the human person, while at the same time preventing the institutional corruption which could jeopardize the very security of the State.

By its very nature the drug trade has become an international criminal activity which accordingly urgently requires effective international measures accompanied by all the resources necessary to fight this crime against mankind. It is not reasonable to place the primary responsibility for the fight against this criminal activity on the producer countries, when it is known that production is in fact a function of the demand of the countries where the narcotic drugs are consumed. Bolivia, in its own interests, is prepared to strike at the root of the problems through a new conceptual and practical approach which would make it quite clear that the responsibility for the fight against the drug trade lies with the international community and that the major contribution must be made by the consumer countries.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

It is irrational to ask a country, embroiled in trying to find a solution to its economic problems at enormous economic sacrifices, at the same time to devote its meagre resources to an isolated struggle against the drug trade. It must be acknowledged that economic and technical limitations may indeed affect the effectiveness of the fight against drugs. Notwithstanding its difficulties, though Bolivia is proceeding vigorously to eradicate non-traditional and surplus production of coca leaves as part of a comprehensive programme set up as part of its international commitments.

Bolivia, which is a nation severely hurt by this scourge, argues that the internationalization of the fight against the drug trade within the framework of the United Nations - and this was a proposal vigorously supported by the President of Venezuela, Mr. Jaime Lusinchi - can be one of the major achievements of the United Nations over the next decade, and would be one in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter. After all, the Charter is directed at promoting international co-operation in the solution of social and humanitarian problems as serious as the drug trade.

In this context Bolivia firmly supports the convening by the United Nations of a ministerial conference in 1987 to consider the legal, institutional and educational ramifications of the illicit international drug traffic.

In this connection, it is necessary to find new, imaginative and practical means for the international campaign against drugs. While on the subject, it would be useful to consider the setting up of an international economic fund, principally supported by the so-called consumer countries, and aimed at the purchase of coca leaves from their countries of origin in order to prevent the output of these coca leaves from falling into the hands of organized crime. At the same time, a world system to monitor production could be set up without damaging the economies of rural areas.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

This would be the most direct and immediate way of attacking the root of this evil in producer countries and could be combined with an active policy directed at finding substitutes for the production of the coca leaf.

The international community is on notice that the maintenance of peace and the continuation of democracy depend on the development and well-being of the backward regions of our planet. When considering the world economic situation, however, we note that the 1980s may end as a lost decade for development, unless major economic measures are taken to relieve the crushing burden of external debt on the economic and social structure of many developing nations.

The serious situation facing the majority of third-world countries, tied down by their debt-servicing obligations, has been emphasized. Statistics published by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), show that the external debt of those countries has risen, from \$20,800 million to \$310,000 million.

As a graphic illustration of this, a recent report of the Inter-American Development Bank revealed that debt-servicing in Latin American countries represents twice the war reparations payments imposed by the Allies on Germany in 1919, which that country was compelled to repudiate in the 1920s. Recently, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reminded us that the foreign debt-servicing of Latin America totals more than 5 per cent of its gross domestic product. It is known that mere interest payments total more than \$100,000 million a year.

In the face of such a situation, Latin America notes with dismay the insensitivity of some developed countries and international lending agencies, which display unawareness of the social dimensions of the problem or whose actions are guided by purely mercantile criteria and are uninterested in seeking any other kind of solution.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

The various dimensions of the situation, taken together, make clear the urgent need for a reappraisal of policies which must be adopted forthwith if these problems are to be dealt with.

Longer repayment time limits for developing countries are imperative, as are lower or preferential rates of interest. This would involve a financial cost which would have to be met by the international financial community on the basis of criteria to be agreed upon. The restagging of debts over a period of years, the creation of international facilities to subsidize interest charges, and directly relating debt-servicing to the performance of international prices, without in certain cases ruling out a simple writing off of certain debts, are some of the direct measures which seem to be necessary factors in any lasting solution to the debt problem.

However, whatever measures are taken to resolve the debt crisis, they will be insufficient to reactivate the development process if at the same time consideration is not given to joint action directed at stimulating development through an increased flow of funds to debtor countries. In this connection the change in emphasis announced by the United States with respect to Latin America's external debt could represent a turning point in the financial crisis besetting the region. It seems to indicate acceptance of the argument that policies directed at development will make it possible for the region to find more effective ways of meeting its enormous obligations deriving from Latin America's external debt, compared to the austerity policies required up to now by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The United States initiative would imply a less stringent regulatory policy followed by the IMF and use of the World Bank and commercial banks as suppliers of fresh funds making it possible for Latin American debtor nations to embark again on their economic development. Nevertheless, we are concerned that

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

over the months to come a slowing down of the United States economy could have grave consequences for developing countries, which are still subject to the North's protectionist tendencies. These throttle their economies by limiting their export prospects and, consequently, their capacity to pay.

The time has come, therefore, to take stock and to look at this matter in a serious and comprehensive way. Latin America is the only under-developed part of the Western world. Encouragement and assistance to its development is the only way to prevent the region from slipping into economic and social disarray. Anarchy in Latin America has always been the antechamber to dictatorship, and we have no alternative but to demonstrate, with concrete and swift examples, that democracy is able to liberate peoples from poverty and ignorance.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

The greatest and most decisive event in our century was the grandiose awakening of the new nations of Africa, Asia and America. The success of decolonization was, however, the result of a common international determination which emerged in the post-war period in the midst of the realities of colonial power. Cannot a similar international consensus bring about a far-reaching reform of world economic structures? Can the creditor nations not realize that, with each passing day, external debt becomes the most dynamic factor working for change in the world economic order, making peoples aware of the international injustice that prevails within the system? More than dogmas, myths and paradises, external debt is acting as the great catalyst of the will for change among peoples.

This will is expressed here from this tribune of the nations, and is rising like an uncontrollable tide. The dilemma at this difficult and dangerous time in international relations is clear: either the machinery of world power changes the rules of the economic game through a joint international exercise of will, such as prevailed after the Second World War to liquidate colonialism, or the world will be dragged into a financial holocaust which will not be without political implications.

This holocaust is already under way. I am speaking now on behalf of a nation that lies right in the eye of this international crisis.

Bolivia is the country that has the highest rate of inflation in the world. Had the Government headed by President Victor Paz Estenssoro not introduced a new economic policy, hyperinflation, according to estimates, could have amounted to more than 44,000 per cent this year. This single example in itself is indicative of the abyss into which my country could have fallen.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

For Bolivia the fall in the prices of basic export products due to the world recession meant a decline of approximately 20 per cent in its gross domestic product. If population growth and the negative impact of of inflation are taken into account, it can be stated that per capita national income fell by more than 30 per cent between 1983 and 1985.

This economic contraction affected the most important social and economic sectors. Exports from the mining sector, which was in a steep decline, dropped by over 25 per cent as compared with 1977. The agricultural sector, which accounts for two-thirds of the population, experienced a similar drop over the same period. Urban unemployment and underemployment are at present the lot of approximately 40 per cent of the active urban population. Between 1982 and 1984 exports as a whole fell by 50 per cent, which was reflected in a sharp decline in the rate of domestic development.

It was estimated that, at the end of 1984, Bolivia's public and private external debt amounted to \$4.693 billion. Exports that year totalled approximately \$780 million, whereas imports amounted to some \$520 million. In the meantime, external debt servicing in 1984 had risen to a total of \$804 million, a figure that the Bolivian State was materially unable to pay.

What country could overcome so many calamities without political repercussions? However, Bolivia has preserved democracy, and once again the soul and spirit of the Bolivian people have withstood the test of adversity.

"To dispel any false hopes, although not hope itself, which must be maintained to the full in order to meet the challenge posed by misfortune, we can state", said President Paz Estenssoro, "that there would be no point in living in a democracy if the people die of hunger".

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

In view of the fact that the country had been destroyed by poverty caused by the world recession which brought about a drop in the prices of the minerals it exports, it was incumbent upon the Government and people of Bolivia to reverse this economic trend. The inevitable alternative would have been a calamity of unimaginable proportions. Aware of this responsibility, my Government has implemented a new economic policy which implies austerity measures and adjustments, but which also presupposes the modernization and improvement of the production systems and resources available.

President Paz Estenssoro put into words the determination of Bolivia, a country that does not give in and will not retreat one step in the face of forces that yesterday did not hesitate to destroy the country in order to destroy the system. In his view

"there is no formula for resolving the terrible crisis convulsing Bolivia other than the collective sum of moral values and constant labour which can increase exportable wealth. We must manage the scarce economic and financial resources properly, agree to a pause in the social struggle and convince ourselves that there can be no renaissance for the Republic unless we understand the scale of the catastrophe and the few effective remedies available to us to reverse this overwhelming situation."

It would be a sad irony if, at a time when Bolivia is making increasing sacrifices to help itself, the international community were to refuse to support my country in its efforts. My people are at present making tremendous sacrifices to overcome the crisis and to consolidate a democratic political community. We know that we are not alone, and that representatives gathered here and their respective Governments will transform this Assembly into the most active instrument for international co-operation and solidarity.

(Mr. Garrett Aillon, Bolivia)

On behalf of my country I express my deep faith that the world will set aside its disputes and finally understand that peace is inseparable from the well-being of peoples, that poverty represents the denial of life and that there can be no worse dependency than poverty. Let us have the courage to proclaim that, as has been said here, we have not lost our faith in the ability to transform life and to transform the world, and that here in the United Nations after 40 years we have not lost the spirit of San Francisco, which in 1945 represented hope when the glow of victory seemed to light the way to a new dawn for mankind.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Vice-President of the Republic of Bolivia for his important address.

Mr. Julio Garrett Aillon, Vice-President of the Republic of Bolivia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. HARDING (Jamaica): On behalf of the delegation of Jamaica, I take the opportunity to extend warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the fortieth session of the General Assembly. It is altogether fitting that in this important anniversary year of the United Nations the General Assembly should have presiding over its deliberations a veteran diplomat of your calibre who has over many years given such distinguished service at the United Nations.

I take the opportunity also to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Paul Lusaka of Zambia, for his outstanding presidency during the thirty-ninth session.

In the past year there has been a mix of events which have brought both despair and glimmers of hope. In the course of history, some years bear the stamp of some dominating event or series of events for which they remain memorable. I fear that the past year may be remembered as a notable year for the number and scale of disasters which have struck in different places and different forms. We recall with sadness the drought and famine in Africa, the Bhopal disaster, a number of airline and train crashes, and last month's tragic earthquakes in Mexico City, all of which meant suffering, death and devastation. They all demonstrate how fragile is the human condition and the extent to which we are all susceptible to shattering blows by natural calamity or malfunctioning technology. It should not be overlooked that it is adversity of this kind which often emphasizes the common bond of humanity that unites us and places in true perspective the barriers dividing us. We have seen this reflected in the generous outpouring of verbal and material expressions of sympathy, solidarity and support from the world at large to the people of each afflicted nation. Jamaica once again expresses its sympathy to the Governments and peoples affected.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

The United Nations has been involved in disaster relief through the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), but recent experience has illustrated the great importance of readiness and efficient emergency services, as well as overall co-ordination, in relief efforts. We believe that this is an area in which international co-operation can be expanded, and we urge that consideration be given to the strengthening of United Nations capabilities in this field.

On the broader scene, the international situation is still charged with tension and uncertainty, although some developments during the past year have generated some optimism. We have been encouraged by the resumption of dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union, the resumption of bilateral arms control negotiations, and the agreement for a summit meeting between the leaders of those two countries in Geneva next month. We consider it an important opportunity for establishing greater understanding and more stable relations. There is much at stake in this meeting affecting the general atmosphere in international affairs and the outlook for the future. We hope for a constructive approach and a constructive spirit from both sides, so that the results may pave the way for a new era in East-West relations.

It could also give an impetus to progress in arms control and disarmament in which achievements have so far been meagre. The continued proliferation of nuclear weapons increases the ever-present danger to our very existence. Jamaica reiterates its view that the process of nuclear disarmament should begin and that it should start with an agreement on a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. In our view, this would not only open the way for progress to be made in relation to nuclear weapons but would also foster a climate for moving forward on arms control for other categories of weapons. In a world where suffering and death from want

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

are brought so sharply to our attention, particularly in recent times, it is shameful that so much of the world's resources is being devoted to the manufacture and procurement of armaments. A recent estimate of world expenditure on arms puts it at an annual figure of \$1,000 billion - an astounding indictment of the priorities in the world today. The lessons of the past have taught us the limits of military power. What is needed in our time are conditions of peace and economic well-being as the foundations for security. Our collective energies and resources should be channelled in that direction.

Time is marching on, and too little is achieved in meeting the challenges being faced and the problems being posed. We meet in this Assembly year after year and express our common hopes for a better and safer world beyond the narrow vision of national interests; yet the political accommodation and adjustments to make them a reality are not made. International co-operation must be seen to be working if it is to be maintained and extended.

There are disturbing trends which indicate that there are forces at work aimed at limiting the scope of international action and avoiding a multilateral approach in dealing with problems of the day. It is therefore important that results can be shown and progress made on the many problems facing the international community to reinforce continued faith in our multilateral institutions.

One area in which there is an emerging consensus for international action is in relation to the situation in South Africa. Events over the past year or so have brought the issue to a critical point. Over 700 persons are estimated to have lost their lives in the continuing unrest in that country, and it must be clear to the oppressors that the people will not abandon their struggle, even in the face of the régime's murderous tactics. The killings, mass arrests, bannings and detentions

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

have proved to be of no avail in stemming the tide of resistance. There is but one solution: the apartheid system must be dismantled and replaced by an order based on equal rights for all South Africans. Apartheid cannot be reformed; it must be destroyed. Superficial adjustments and token changes are not acceptable.

For years the régime has been stubbornly and arrogantly rejecting the demands for fundamental changes. Now the régime is beginning to feel the squeeze from the combined pressure of the uprising from within and sanctions imposed or threatened from without. Jamaica has long argued that economic sanctions by the world community was a necessary ingredient to bring about change in South Africa. We are encouraged to see that Governments which have hitherto been hesitant in adopting economic sanctions have begun to move in that direction. The measures that have been announced, though limited in scope, are a welcome beginning. But much more will be needed to convince the South African régime of the serious resolve of the international community on this question. We are therefore looking forward to the adoption of further measures to curtail investments and financial flows to South Africa and wider restrictions in economic relations.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

Jamaica considers it important that there should be no faltering or hesitation in taking far-reaching measures. It is time for the world community to act, and to act decisively. In the meanwhile, we wish to reiterate our support for and solidarity with those who are struggling so valiantly internally.

For it is not just a question of oppression and injustice inside South Africa. Peace is at risk. South Africa continues to commit blatant acts of aggression against neighbouring African States and to promote subversion and civil war in others. Over the past year it added further to its brutal and shameful record of aggression in a series of attacks against Angola and Botswana. No respect is shown for legality and the sovereign rights of African States in the region.

In Namibia, the pattern is repeated. South Africa's contempt for international law and for the rights of the inhabitants of the Territory is astounding. Through bad faith and duplicity the régime has frustrated every effort for a negotiated solution. The plan adopted on the initiative of the Western contact group and so elaborately worked out in 1978 has been scuttled by South African deception and treachery. It has apparently now embarked on implementing its own plan for the Territory by the appointment of a puppet administration.

There is clear need to take action against South Africa on this question. We have a duty to the Namibian people, for whom the United Nations has direct responsibility as the legal administering authority for the Territory. The international community must, therefore, give urgent consideration as to what steps should now be taken. We consider it necessary for the Security Council to meet again in the near future to consider what collective action is to be taken to discharge its responsibilities and to secure the implementation of its resolutions.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

In our own region, the problems of Central America continue to be of great concern to us. Over the past year, fighting has continued, but we are encouraged by the patient and persevering diplomacy of the Contadora Group, which continues to enjoy the confidence and support of the international community in their search for a peaceful resolution of the conflicts among the States in the region. The regional commitment to finding a solution has been reinforced by the initiative to establish a four-member Support Group to assist in furthering the Contadora objectives. Jamaica fully supports these efforts. We particularly welcome the results of the meeting of Contadora and Central American Foreign Ministers held on 12 and 13 September in Panama City in which agreement was reached on a time-table for negotiations on the Draft Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America which will enable the process to be completed before the end of November. We expect that by then all the parties will have signed the documents and will be ready to implement their provisions fully.

The state of affairs in the Middle East must continue to receive our close attention. The basic issues are well-known. Our view is that the elements of an overall settlement have long been identified and have found general international acceptance. They involve the withdrawal of Israel from Arab territory occupied since the 1967 war, recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and the acknowledgement of the right of all States in the area to live in peace and security within recognized boundaries.

New initiatives, such as that proposed by King Hussein of Jordan, create new opportunities which should be explored as a basis for peace negotiations. We cannot ignore actions that add further obstacles to the search for peace and contribute to a climate of tension, instability and insecurity to the region. We do not accept the assertion of any new doctrine which implies that the sovereign

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

rights of a third party State can be nakedly violated in response to a perceived wrong elsewhere. Accordingly, we deplore the attack carried out by Israel in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Tunisia.

In other areas of regional conflict, there has been regrettably little movement in the past year. The war between Iran and Iraq continues to rage without an immediate prospect of peace, but it is important that the situation be not abandoned as hopeless. We continue to urge the Secretary-General to use his good offices to mediate between the parties.

In Cyprus there is need to give every possible encouragement to the Secretary-General and to efforts to revive the intercommunal talks and avoid the imposition of a solution by fait accompli.

Regrettably, there has been little change in Kampuchea and Afghanistan, and we must renew the call for withdrawal of foreign forces from the respective countries. We strongly deplore the reported atrocities and violations of human rights that have occurred.

We note with interest that on the Korean peninsula bilateral contacts between the two Koreas have begun and we hope that these preliminary contacts will develop into a fruitful dialogue contributing to the reduction of tension in the area and laying the basis for a future of peaceful relations.

I now turn to issues of international economic co-operation. The international community needs to examine closely the course of events in developing countries over the past few years. However one looks at the problems of the third world, the necessary requirements for their solution are clear. But there are no short-term panaceas. Developing countries require time. We require resources. We need time to make and consolidate important structural changes, some brought on by the severe economic difficulties of the past few years, others by conscious policy

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

action. We need resources to ease the difficulties associated with these changes and to put in place the productive inputs that the long-term development of our economies require.

I say that the international community needs to examine the course of events over the past few years for a good reason. The record shows that the developing countries have made considerable effort to deal with their problems. The fact that our economies are still in crisis is a measure of the intractability of the problems we face, not a reflection of the sacrifice and effort peoples and governments in the third world have made in the past few years.

These problems and the plight of our countries have been seriously exacerbated by the continuation of unfavourable international economic conditions. The economic recovery in the industrial countries, which is vital to the overall well-being of the world economy and, particularly, to export prospects of the developing countries, has been uneven, and now shows worrying signs of running out of steam. This is particularly disconcerting; for despite minor gains in output and more significant gains in trade in 1984, per capita product in the developing world remains below what it was at the beginning of the decade.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, which has been struggling to maintain levels of economic well-being achieved before the onset of the current turbulent decade, per capita product was almost 9 per cent lower in 1984 than in 1980 and similar to the level obtained by the region in 1977. There can be no argument with the view that the first half of the 1980s has been the most difficult period for the developing countries since the depression years of the 1930s.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

We have seen in this period major adverse changes in the terms of trade for many primary commodities, the sharp rise in international interest rates, severe cutbacks in international lending, and all of this on the heels of the energy price increases at the end of the 1970s, to which so many developing countries were still adapting.

The result has been economic difficulties of unprecedented proportions in our countries. We should not forget that in an important sense it is not countries which feel pain, it is people. People living in the developing countries have seen their standards of living fall since 1980, they have seen social services curtailed as the international recession and other external shocks have led to internal economic imbalances and dislocations of growing magnitude. Jamaica does not make this point idly. One World Bank study which assesses the impact of external shocks on the balance-of-payments of selected developing countries has placed Jamaica at the top of the list in terms of the severity of the impact on our balance of payments in the period 1979-1982.

Yet in the face of all this we have seen, at all times, evidence of the resilience and the will of people in the third world to cope, adjust and press forward. For example, the share of manufacturing in the total exports of developing countries as a whole has grown from 15 to 50 per cent in the past two decades. Although this is still well short of the target of a 25 per cent share of world industrial production, it is indicative of the economic strategy that is being pursued. Even as they struggle to cope with external shocks a significant number of developing countries are trying to diversify their productive capacities and to make their economies more efficient. This is particularly reflected in the fact that the World Bank has already lent some \$4.5 billion for structural adjustment programmes.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

At another level, evidence of the demonstrated will of developing countries to address the problems they face is found in the reduction of the cumulative current account deficit. Developing countries have reduced that deficit by almost two-thirds from a high of over \$105 billion in 1981 to just \$35 billion in 1984. Even this bald statistic does not do justice to the firmness of fiscal and monetary policies that have had to be introduced. The maturity and stamina of Governments have been tested and the heroic fortitude of the peoples of the third world has been demonstrated. As one prominent public figure from an industrial country has said:

"The citizens of the developing world cannot be expected to tighten their belts indefinitely nor can debtor countries continue to be net exporters of capital."

We can clearly assert, therefore, that two key issues are protectionism and debt. The international community must ensure a trading environment which is free from tariff and non-tariff barriers against the products of developing countries.

The irony is that the more developing countries seek to broaden their economic base by moving into areas such as manufacturing and non-traditional products, the more intensive are the pressures for protectionism in the industrial countries. But for them the solution does not lie in protecting declining industries or sectors from more cost-effective producers in the third world. The interests of efficiency and equity are best served when costs and benefits associated with shifting comparative advantage are not nullified at the points of entry by tariff and non-tariff barriers which penalize emerging industries and sectors in the developing world.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

This is not an abstract concern. The World Bank has estimated that an increase in protectionism large enough to produce a 10 per cent deterioration in the terms of trade of Latin America and the Caribbean exacts a cost from our region equivalent to the real interest cost of the region's entire debt. The situation, therefore, requires wise and firm leadership. Common sense tells us that if developing countries cannot export they will be able neither to pay their debts nor to continue to be a major market for the exports of the industrialized countries.

The shift from equity to debt financing that began in the 1970s now results in massive debt-service payments by developing countries. Last year those payments amounted to \$100 billion. That outflow has contributed in significant measure to the overall net resource transfer that occurred from capital importing developing countries to developed countries in 1984. In Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, 35 per cent of export earnings were needed to make interest payments on debt in 1984. In one country the figure was as high as 57 per cent. This cannot be sustained. The debt problem had its genesis in scarce resources: we borrow to supplement our resources and to achieve greater returns in the future. But the unprecedented economic events of the first half of the decade have created the need for a breathing space. In the immediate future difficult decisions must be made. Those decisions should be consistent with a tradition of fidelity to obligations as well as showing a full understanding of the difficult social and economic realities which now exist in many debtor countries. The debt issue urgently requires judicious and sympathetic handling within a framework which recognizes that it is not simply now a matter of meeting obligations, which Jamaica, for one, is pledged

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

to do, but has become part of the problem of development itself. Jamaica continues to support the proposal for an international conference on money and finance for development, where these and other related issues can receive the integrated treatment we believe is necessary.

It is precisely because of problems of these dimensions that there can be no shirking of the national responsibility to be resolute and creative in tackling the problems of development. Equally, and it is more important to say so in this forum, it is precisely because of the international nature of problems such as these that there can be no retreat from multilateral co-operation.

This year the activities of the United Nations have been marked by two important events: the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya, and the observance of International Youth Year.

Jamaica is pleased to have participated in the Conference, much of the success of which was due to the efforts of the Government of Kenya. The adoption of the Forward Looking Strategies was a notable achievement, and we place particular emphasis on the implementation of the programmes to the year 2000 for advancing the status of women and for their full integration.

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

As part of the celebrations for International Youth Year, Jamaica played host to a Youth Festival and International Youth Conference which issued a significant declaration.

In reflecting on the achievements of the United Nations over the past 40 years, one accomplishment which stands out, and one in which Jamaica takes special pride in being associated with, is the conclusion of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea signed at Montego Bay on 10 December 1982. I am happy to report that, on the closing date for signature last December, the Convention had 159 signatories, a clear and unmistakable indication of the broad support it enjoys in the international community.

The Preparatory Commission, which has the responsibility for implementation of the Convention, held two meetings during the year, and we are satisfied that it is making progress in carrying out its mandate. But we must note with concern that, under national legislation, licences are being issued which purport to grant exploitation rights to parts of the international sea-bed area. This amounts to a direct challenge to the mandate given to the Preparatory Commission and a defiance of the will of the international community and is totally unacceptable. At its Geneva meeting the Preparatory Commission adopted a declaration in which it reaffirmed that the only régime for the exploitation of the area and its resources is that established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and rejected any claim, agreement or action incompatible with the Convention as a basis for creating legal rights to the international sea-bed area which is the common heritage of mankind. We once again urge Member States who have not yet done so to ratify the Convention as a tangible affirmation of their support for it.

For the United Nations, the future holds great challenges, and the price of inaction or failure is frighteningly high. In disarmament, in peace and security, in international economic co-operation, in the field of human rights, in the care

(Mr. Harding, Jamaica)

of the environment, in all these areas and others, we have an uncompromising obligation to ourselves and to future inhabitants of this planet. Those who emphasize the shortcomings of the United Nations and who disregard its achievements should be made to recognize that there can be no turning back. The best hope for mankind is to persevere in the search for solutions through the institutions of multilateral co-operation, for the common bond of humanity transcends the divisions among States.

Mr. BARROW (Belize): On the historic occasion of this fortieth session of the General Assembly, we hail the fact that mankind has endured. We have survived intact through the sometimes uncomfortable period between the end of the last World War and the threat of a later, more complete destruction.

Much of the credit goes to this Organization, and much to the success of the deliberative mechanisms structured within the system of the United Nations and enshrined in its Charter, mechanisms which have institutionalized and underscored the universal recognition of the continuing need for the nations of planet earth to live together in some semblance of civilized behaviour.

To be sure, the success of the United Nations has been limited, for the United Nations has been an imperfect instrument in an uncertain world, but the very fact of our survival is a cause for celebration. Belize therefore joins the rest of the community in recording its appreciation of the efforts of this Organization in helping to ward off the ultimate destruction of humanity, which the awesome elements of our technology have made so frighteningly possible.

We congratulate you, Mr. President, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the fortieth session of the General Assembly, in full confidence that the brilliant record as statesman and conciliator that you bring to this high office will be placed at our disposal during the coming months.

For your predecessor, Belize's great friend, Paul Lusaka, we have the highest

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

words of praise for his inspired leadership of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, and for the manner in which he conducted the deliberations of this body during his term of office. We wish him well in what must surely continue to be a distinguished career in the service of his country, Zambia, and of the wider international community.

Since the last session of the General Assembly, the people of Belize have exercised their democratic right to choose another vision of what their future should be. They have chosen growth instead of stagnation; expansion, instead of contraction; hope, instead of despair. They have chosen the United Democratic Party, under the leadership of Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel, to lead Belize as their newly elected Government. This choice was freely made, without coercion, without bloodshed and without recrimination, and Belizeans have chosen a Government dedicated to the cause of freedom, personal independence and democratic development.

The task of the new Government now is to demonstrate the boldness of action necessary to translate beliefs and principles into reality, proceeding in the confidence that within the Belizean people lie the power and the will to transform their lives and the life of the nation.

Our most important goal is to stimulate economic growth and move the nation to increased employment and prosperity. Accordingly, domestic policies are being put into effect aimed at dignifying Belizeans in all walks of life.

Inheriting an economy that has been virtually crippled by the burdens imposed upon us by the limitations of the past, as well as the greater problems arising from unsatisfactory world economic conditions, we do not pretend to face an easy task.

We are not alone in decrying the external factors over which we have no control and which have proved a scourge to every developing country. We continue to face a decline in both the markets and the prices offered for our primary

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

products mainly because of protectionist policies adopted by the importing countries. Our access to international financial assistance becomes more and more limited with the imposition of more difficult - and at times socially unacceptable - conditions for borrowing and repayment. And the debt burden grows heavier with the rise in international interest rates.

While we adhere fully to the principle of observing international obligations, we urge the financial community to look with favour at proposals to reduce the crushing burden of debt repayments. The concept - already developed by some of our sister Latin American nations - of linking repayments to export earnings, is clearly a meritorious one.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

In his report to the United Nations this year, the Secretary-General makes pointed reference to the inclination of many countries to resort to protectionism to solve their own problems at the expense of other countries. We too lament this trend towards economic nationalism and urge the implementation of a universal legal principle of obligation to enhance the development of less-advantaged peoples. The problems of poorer countries must continue to be the focus of attention, and the countervailing growth of quasi-regionalism and bilateralism among the big countries must be retarded.

A pillar of our own economic development in Belize is the free enterprise system. But it is difficult for those who want to believe in the wisdom of the system to contemplate its continuing unfairness, where the industrialized world withholds necessary assistance and co-operation; where multilateral financial institutions inject political considerations into eligibility criteria; and where sovereign Governments are told that they must accept externally imposed macro-economic prescriptions or face intolerable contractions in the financial flows from world lending institutions.

Free enterprise should serve the interests of development, not challenge the bases of our fragile economies, nor act as the instrument for the further impoverishment of poor societies. And developing nations like Belize, with small open economies, must wage a constant struggle to preserve their independence and their sovereignty in the face of the geopolitical realities of implied coercion in an increasingly bipolar world.

As a small Central American and Caribbean State, Belize's foreign policy must of necessity project domestic concerns but be based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, political pluralism, non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations and the peaceful resolution of disputes. We must vigilantly and unselfishly act in solidarity with other small States experiencing similar problems and sharing common concerns.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

These are the principles that guide Belize's relationship with members of the Caribbean community, who share with us a kinship born of a common cultural heritage, a common history and a common colonial experience. We are committed to acting in concert with our Caribbean sister States to make the subregional grouping more effective, more integrated and more representative of the aspirations of our people. And we urge the co-operation of extraregional nations with the policy that the Caribbean be made a zone of peace.

In the normal course of events, there is also a coincidence of interests with the larger hemispheric nations, particularly the United States. My Government, however, does not subscribe to any doctrine of geographic determinism. The fact of our being located within the so-called sphere of influence of a world Power cannot dictate that Belize's freedom of action in its international relations should be circumscribed by any need for an external imprimatur.

Belize's relations with neighbouring States on our Central American mainland are based on respect for national self-determination, sovereignty and the right of all peoples to choose their own political, social and economic systems free from external threats and pressures. We have of our own accord, however, chosen to subscribe fully to the principles of parliamentary democracy, and we note with satisfaction the marked trend towards the democratization, or perhaps redemocratization, of our America.

The violence that continues to consume Central America and cause wrenching dislocations of people from their homelands is regrettable and weighs heavily on our ability as peace-loving nations to create the conditions for a return to normalcy in our region.

My Government has a particular concern in this matter because the transborder migration of those fleeing the conflicts has produced an influx of refugees into Belize which strains our already thinly stretched social and economic resources and threatens to produce serious ethnic and demographic tensions.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

Furthermore, Belizeans, with our history of peaceful and stable development, cannot forever remain immune to the inherent hostility and mistrust that characterize the evolution of the conflict in this region. We cannot ignore the attempts being made by outside Powers to exploit historical and prevailing conditions in an effort to gain advantage in the global East-West confrontational struggle.

We maintain the view that a regional political solution is imperative. We hold to the thesis that the Contadora process is the best means to deal with the situation.

During the 10 months of the new administration in Belize, the Prime Minister and members of his cabinet have had an opportunity to begin discussions and exchange views with members of the Contadora countries on developments in Central America. Throughout these discussions, one theme has been recurring, and that is the need finally to put in place the mechanisms which will ensure a lasting solution to the regional problem.

There is now an urgent need for the protagonists in the conflict to summon up the act of political will necessary for the signing of the final draft of the Contadora Act on peace and co-operation in Central America. For only then will there be an elimination of the distances that have been created between polities and groups by artificial political and economic philosophies. And only then will the sovereignty and independence of the States of Central America be strengthened and the creative energies of our people freed to concentrate on the developmental activities necessary to assure us prosperous, well-ordered societies.

My Government has no desire to complicate further the problems of the region, but in view of the still unresolved claim by the Republic of Guatemala to the territory of Belize, we consider the security and defence of our homeland to be our highest foreign policy priority.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

The new Government of Belize has committed itself to showing realism and flexibility so that a peaceful, diplomatic solution can be found. To that end we participated in informal discussions with officials of the Guatemalan Government earlier this year in order to explore ways of arriving at a solution which recognizes Belizean solidarity and our right to maintain and preserve intact our present and constitutional borders, a solution that will do this even as it seeks to satisfy some of the relevant security concerns of Guatemala.

However, it must be made clear that the independence of Belize is irreversible. It is a practical and legal fact of international life. To seek to maintain otherwise is counter-productive and counter-historical. In order for any real progress to be made, discussions and negotiations with Guatemala must reflect this reality.

Belizeans applaud the signals of a return to democracy and civilian rule in Guatemala and fully expect understanding and flexibility in future discussions with a civilian administration.

A prelude to harmonious relations between Belize and Guatemala, then, is the recognition that two separate, sovereign entities share a common border. Both are involved in the search for better conditions of life for their citizens. This search can best be conducted in an atmosphere of peace, stability and internal security.

Good-neighbourliness between our two countries, as well as mutual understanding and respect, can help remove the barriers and mistrust that have prevented us from living together as neighbours should. This is the position of Belize. We appeal to the authorities in Guatemala to respond positively.

On another aspect of our security concerns, my Government has been greatly exercised by, and absolutely condemns, the blot on our society that is the production of and trafficking in drugs.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

Over the past five years, and spurred on by the phenomenal and continually expanding consumer market provided by the United States, Belize has become a large-scale producer of and trafficker in marijuana. We do not need anyone to tell us of the insidious nature of the threat posed by this aberrant activity - to our institutions, to the moral and ethnical dimensions of our national life, and to the very rule of law and democracy in our country.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

Within the limits of our resources we have made Herculean efforts to stamp out the trade and to defeat the danger of destabilization which it poses. Since the beginning of this year joint military/police operations have succeeded in destroying over 80,000 marijuana plants and 70,000 pounds of processed marijuana. Some 375 persons have been charged in our country for dealing in marijuana and 288 have so far been convicted. In the past 6 months alone four United States registered aircraft and 10 motor vehicles have been seized by the police and confiscated by our courts.

That is why we find it so distressing when the claim is advanced that Belize has failed to eradicate any of its drug crop. To say that is to propagate disinformation of the most malicious sort. To be sure, we have had differences of opinion with others who engage in the war against drugs, principally over the methodology to be used in our own eradication campaign. Aerial spraying of marijuana plantations using chemical herbicides has been pressed upon us, but we have so far preferred to employ manual eradication methods until we can assure ourselves and our people that the aerial-spraying exercise would involve no unacceptable health or environmental risks. Even now, we are taking steps which will enable us to make that determination.

That position has not proved satisfactory to some, which is regrettable. But power disequilibria cannot be allowed to defeat the sovereign right of small States to act in what they consider to be their national interests. We must therefore stand at this rostrum today and, in accordance with the Charter, reject the threat of coercion implied in the possibility that has been held before us of an aid cut-off or other measure designed to force us to move prematurely and in a way we consider undesirable.

In the wider hemispheric context my Government regrets the exclusion of Belize from the Organization of American States. We trust that the obstacles which now

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

prevent us from becoming a full member of that important body will soon be overcome. We rely on the wisdom, statesmanship and responsibility of the members of the Permanent Council to refashion the Charter of that organization to accommodate the spirit of hemispheric unity and universality envisaged by the Charter's framers.

My Government's world view generates the imperative for Belize to be an outspoken advocate for parliamentary democracy, for mutual co-operation among States in the world community and for scrupulous respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of our citizens.

We believe in the multilateral approach to resolving some of the pressing economic, social and political problems facing us as nations and as political groupings. Any retreat from multilateralism, in our view, erodes the effectiveness of political communities acting in concert and isolates the smaller and weaker among us from the benefits of joint action. Such retreat is especially to be regretted in this fortieth anniversary year of the United Nations, for the very raison d'être of the United Nations was interdependence, as was made clear by the 1 January 1942 Declaration that created the wartime alliance, and as is stressed in the Atlantic Charter incorporated in the 1942 Declaration which, in a very real sense, is the forerunner of the present-day United Nations Charter.

With all this in view, Belize reiterates its commitment to all regional and international organizations of which we are a member, including the Caribbean Community, the Commonwealth of nations, the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement. While we feel that there are those who have sought to convert the Non-Aligned Movement into a forum for ritual and strident name-calling, and, while we view that as counterproductive, my Government nonetheless feels that the spirit of Bandung, the original principles that animated the Movement, can still be a force for world peace.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

My Government supports the original initiatives of the Group of 77, as ratified by the General Assembly, which resulted in the call for a new international economic order. The main goals of the new international economic order are of clear relevance and importance to Belize, since we suffer the common problems and the common concerns of other third-world countries.

Belize commits itself to co-operate fully in the effort to persuade the developed countries that the prosperity of the international community as a whole depends on the prosperity of its constituent parts and that the political, economic and social wellbeing of present and future generations depend more than ever on co-operation among all the members of the international community on the basis of sovereign equality.

Belizeans are profoundly concerned that while we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and hail the many accomplishments of the Organization and its positive influences over the emerged world order we also mark the fortieth anniversary of the denial to the Namibian people of their right to freedom and independence.

We agonize over the sheer powerlessness of the international community to exert effective pressure on the white rulers of South Africa to loosen their stranglehold on the fate of the black peoples of southern Africa.

Every step - however little and however late - taken by countries in a position to influence the course of events in southern Africa in an effort to dismantle the morally corrupt and internationally discredited régime of apartheid is a practical demonstration of support for the right of the black majority in its struggle to control its own destiny.

Apartheid is a crime against humanity, and apartheid South Africa has forfeited the right to be regarded as a member of the community of nations. All measures aimed at isolating that régime need to be intensified. The argument that

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

mandatory, effective sanctions will only aggravate the plight of the already suffering black people of South Africa is a spurious one, patronizing at best and, at worst, a dishonest excuse for the inaction that will perpetuate abhorrent apartheid.

No less emphatic are we with regard to the need to safeguard the rights of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic, or the rights of the peoples of East Timor and of the Western Sahara to determine their own destiny, of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and the right of Israel to exist within secure borders, of the rights of the Lebanese people who yearn for peace, of the Afghan people to regain control of their own land and of the Kampuchians to reestablish their sovereignty.

We find it ironic that the Near and Middle East, which have been the cradle of so many of the world's leading cultures, should today be the scene of so much tension and so much strife. There must be an end to those unbrotherly actions which, for example, prolong the war between Iran and Iraq.

Finally, we call for immediate action to alleviate the plight of all those countries suffering from hunger, starvation, desertification and disease.

There is no doubt that those wise men who drafted the Charter of the United Nations 40 years ago in San Francisco contemplated the evolution of an imperfect world. They foresaw disharmony and conflict. That is why the Charter stresses conflict resolution and co-operation among States. Much has changed in those 40 years, but the basic goals remain the same.

Of greatest immediacy is whether the world as we know it will survive for another 40 years. Accordingly, we call on all Member States to make this fortieth anniversary a time of rededication, a time of renewal. Let us strive with increased assiduity, not for military victories but for diplomatic solutions, not for nuclear advantage but for the safety of the human race.

(Mr. Barrow, Belize)

And Belize insists that it is within the principles and practices of the United Nations system, and of its multilateral approach to global peace, that we find the best means of avoiding the apocalyptic prospect - mankind's final nightfall.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.